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RECOLLECTIONS
OF
Methodism and Methodists
IN THE
CITY OF LINCOLN;

WITH CURSORY REMARKS ON SOME PLACES AND PERSONS IN THE
SURROUNDING CIRCUITS, RELATING TO SOME INCIDENTAL
CIRCUMSTANCES AND ODD CHARACTERS, TOGETHER
WITH ANECDOTES, ETC.,

BY THE LATE

GEORGE BARRATT.

LINCOLN:

PUBLISHED BY CHARLES AKRILL, HIGH-STREET, ST. MARTIN'S.

MDCCLXVI.



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P R E F A C E.



BEING frequently urged by a friend of mine to write some of my recollections of Methodism and of the Methodists in Lincoln, and of some persons and places contiguous thereto, I, with much reluctance, at last was induced to make an attempt, not even hoping to produce anything satisfactory to myself or to others. Those matters which came immediately under my own observation are faithfully recorded; to those which I have drawn from other sources, I have used the phrases "perhaps," or "probably," or "I suppose;" but such phrases do not belong so much to facts, as to circumstances belonging to them. It may appear to some ridiculous in me to write a word on such a matter, just in the depth of the winter of life; never having thought of such a thing all my days, excepting that, many years ago, I wrote two small paragraphs for the *Stamford Mercury*. I have a poor opinion of what I have written. Those who please to read the thing, will find it no hard matter to do so; and they who refuse to read it, will have a still easier task to perform.

I, in pure goodwill to all men, subscribe myself,

Their humble servant,

GEORGE BARRATT.

By the Publisher.

THE following pages were written at my request—having frequently had the pleasure of listening to the stories of Methodism in byegone days, as given by our aged friend and others, I felt that, ere long, much of its early history in the neighbourhood would be lost for ever, unless some one, actually connected with the Society's operations, should record it, and finding my aged friend still possessed all the intellectual keenness for which he had so long been renowned, I urged him to the task—this was made possible for him to accomplish, inasmuch as growing infirmities had relieved him from his life's labour of weaving baskets, which, he tells us, began at the early age of seven years: the title and preface being finished during the last week of his life. These pages make no pretension to literary merit, and I have judged it best to print them with all our late friend's strongly marked peculiarities and eccentricities; believing that they will be read by many with deep interest, and, though there may be some expressions which might have been refined, and some others which may possibly give offence, I have not removed them, choosing to let our aged friend record his own views and feelings.

CHARLES AKRILL.

SOME ACCOUNT OF METHODISM AND OF METHODISTS, IN LINCOLN.



This account will be principally confined to the writer's own recollections: for what took place previously to those, he must be allowed to have recourse to what available source he can command.

"The first time Mr. Wesley preached in Lincoln was on the 30th June, 1780, after he had been fifty years without ever setting his foot in the place, as he informs us himself. He came over to Lincoln from Newark, at the request of some gentleman of the former place, whose name I do not know. The city crier having been employed to announce his intention of preaching on the Castle-hill, a large crowd assembled at six in the evening, to whom, under the canopy of heaven, he preached the Word of Life. The day after, at ten in the morning, they were as quiet as on the preceding evening, while on the same spot of ground, he addressed them again. On this occasion the following circumstance took place, which, though of no importance in itself, may properly be related, as tending to illustrate the character and perseverance of the servant of God. About the middle of his sermon a violent storm came on, when Mr. Wood, the keeper, opening the door of the court-house, admitted the preacher and the whole congregation in; and Mr. Wesley, taking his stand where the magistrates usually sat to administer justice, proceeded in preaching the Gospel of God."*

Mr. Wesley visited Lincoln several times after this, preaching on the Castle Hill, and in various other parts of the city. I knew an old lady who said she heard him preach in Cooling's

* A. Watmough's *History of Methodism in Lincolnshire*.

paddock, which was about opposite St. Swithin's Passage; it reached from the Waterside South to the Sincil Dyke, which at that time ran through what is now called Norman Street. The paddock is now entirely filled with houses.

It does not appear that Mr. Wesley succeeded in forming a Society in Lincoln.—We hear of his preaching once in the first chapel built by the Methodists, situate Waterside South, opposite the Ship Inn.

The old lady referred to appeared to have a lively recollection of Mr. Wesley's person, manner, and voice. She described his personal appearance exactly as we see him in the likenesses of him, published with the hymn book, &c. His long silvery hair parted in the middle, which, when he stood up to address the people, he stroked back with his hands, and which then hung on his shoulders, gave him a most venerable appearance, which seemed to overawe the hearers, who behaved themselves with the greatest decorum; he seemed to them, as the lady observed, "more like an angel than a man,"—

"Gentle in manners as of heavenly birth;" his voice she described as being very soft and feminine, more like a woman's voice than that of a man.

One would suppose, from the favourable impression Wesley had made, or appeared to have made, on the people's minds, that they would have been more tolerant to his followers. The sequel will show, that, though the enemy was cowed in the presence of Wesley, and dared not show his cloven foot, he concealed his hatred to the infant cause, which he knew was likely to disturb his dark dominions, and quietly let Wesley slip through his fingers, as a man famed for learning, and so likely to be tolerated by the people; as of old, when Christ and Paul cast out devils, he kept still, but, when their inferiors attempted to do so, he attacked them violently, and overcame them, saying, "Christ I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" I well remember what rancour was conceived and carried out against certain individuals, who were induced to become instructors of the people.—Little did the people understand to what degrees of excellence these men, whom they so much despised, would be raised.

Amongst these was a Mr. Hannah, so frequently mentioned by Mr. Watmough, in his History of Methodism in Lincoln and

Lincolnshire. I have some recollection of that angel of a man ; my mother nursed one or more of his children : he used frequently to call to see the child, when he never failed to give my parents some suitable religious advice. I recollect, also, his presenting my parents with a large sheet of paper, containing similar matters, which they had framed and hung up in the house, as they prized it very much. This person, who was an articled clerk in an office in Lincoln, laboured and studied most assiduously being filled with the love of God and man, and God frequently owned his labours in a very signal manner.—But, alas ! how inscrutable are the ways of God ! this good young man, whose labours seemed so indispensable, was early taken home to his reward ; leaving the little Church to mourn, for its loss was great indeed.

Another who came into the field was a Mr. Daniel Isaac, a schoolmaster in Lincoln, a man of amazing strength of intellect, whom few men could approach in argument. We shall, perhaps, have occasion to mention him in some other relations, ere we finish these trashy lines.

And then the great Richard Watson, than whom, perhaps, scarcely any other man gained so large a share of popularity. I remember how these men were snuffed at, and what contumely was cast on them, and with what virulence and hatred they were spoken of ; so true is it that a prophet has little honour in his own neighbourhood. The dislike of the latter individual might partially arise from a then well-known fact, that he was considered by everybody as a great, long, shambling, silly lad, larger and "softer" than lads in general ; he used to run, "platt ing" his legs and wringing his hands, so that boys, far less than he was, would run after him and pull him about, as if they thought him an idiot. He was put apprentice to Mr. Bescoby, of St. Mary's Lane ; many strange things were said of him, for it appeared plainly that he was out of his place as a worker in wood ; if his master went out, leaving him a job in hand, he would do it, but never thought of setting himself to another ; so would sit himself down on the bench with his arms folded.* When

* Though Rd. Watson shewed an utter want of mechanical capacity, as regards the construction of wheels and other parts of vehicles, he nevertheless shewed unusual aptness in the making of cabinets, work-boxes, &c., some of which remain to this day to attest this singular circumstance.—C.A.

the above matters are taken into consideration, it is scarcely to be wondered at, that the ungodly should be amused with the thought of such an one becoming a teacher of religion.

At that time, the tide of opposition run very high against any who attempted to preach or teach religion who had not been to college, and had been ordained by a bishop. Though the clergy were known to be very corrupt, and many of them very blind in spiritual matters, the people satisfied themselves with thinking if their lives were as good as their teachers', they could not be far wrong, for surely the parson ought to know. I remember having a relative who was remarkably stiff in his opinions respecting the eligibility of the clergy, as being the only proper persons to teach religion; yet was very much struck with the fluency and power with which the untaught addressed and held the people's attention—a thing which no Church sermons could effect. He afterwards became, and lived and died a Methodist. This might arise partly from the knowledge he had of the ignorance and wickedness of several of the clergy on whom he had to wait. He was servant to a parson who resided at Bracebridge, a daringly irreligious man, whom his wife frequently reproved for his hoggish practices, he would sit with his hat on at meals, evidently not caring more for the Divine Being in whose hand his life was, than the dog that lay at his feet; and when he had others in company with him, most of their jokes had reference to religion and religious professors. When they were all drunk together, this was part of one of their songs,

“We'll drink and sing, and quaff our fill;
We can be parsons when we will.”

Such were the “lights of the world” at that time, with whom the poor deluded people expressed themselves satisfied, and whom they supposed capable of teaching the things belonging to the kingdom of God. Here I shall end this digression.

The many fruitless attempts to establish Methodism in Lincoln, must have been very discouraging and trying to the faith of those who had the matter at heart, and felt so deeply its necessity; considering the darkness and depravity of the place. Mr. Watmough mentions, in his History of Methodism in Lincoln and Lincolnshire, an old lady (whom I knew some years before her death,) who acted nobly in her untiring efforts,

—efforts showing the fixedness of her purpose and largeness of her philanthropic heart, and who became the principal instrument in accomplishing the object of her pious wishes. This individual, whose name was Sarah Parrot, whose strength of body and mind might be supposed equal, for she, to look at, was “like the root end of a tree,” lived at Bracebridge, whence she frequently went to Sturton, to attend religious meetings there, such was her zeal for the worship of God. Whilst deeply bemoaning the state of things at Lincoln, some of her friends at Sturton suggested the probability of finding assistance from a lady residing at Gonerby, who had done much for the cause of Methodism at Grantham. Who besides this brave old lady would have done as she did? She immediately made up her mind to see the lady at Gonerby, whose name was Fisher; away she went on foot all the way to Grantham, with a heart beating high with hope, and full of love for precious souls. They were perfect strangers to each other, yet influenced by the same spirit. Sarah met with a very kind reception from Mrs. Fisher, for, though widely different in worldly circumstances, they had kindred hearts, and both breathed one spirit. It was not likely, however, that Mrs. Fisher should immediately make up her mind on so momentous an affair; so poor Sally had to return to Lincoln with a sad heart. But she had not long to remain in doubt, for the step was soon resolved upon. It is said that Mrs. Fisher, in company with some of her friends, opened the hymn book on the words—

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;”

and thought them so appropriate to the circumstances of Sarah Parrott’s visit, that she was at once decided in the matter, and actually acceded to the entreaties of Sarah and her friends, and came to reside at Lincoln.

We have no wish, however, to justify or bring into use, a practice which was very common fifty years ago. It being usual at that period to hear individuals talk of opening the bible or hymn book in such and such a place, and reading such and such words, and in some sort determining their views or conduct thereby, as if there were some magic spell in the act of opening a book; we are glad to know that a more rational mode has superseded this, so objectionable and unwarrantable, if not to say

deceptive practice. In how many instances have individuals been deceived by impressions, though they may have received such impressions from reading the scriptures? I refer to pious females who have laboured to make their impressions agree with resolves, though unwarranted by the holy scriptures, which they have professed to follow; because the object of their impressions were suited to their predilections, attempting to reason themselves into contradictions —some to my knowledge have ventured to take ungodly men for husbands, thinking they would be able to reclaim them, and induce them to choose the ways of righteousness. But I know of no instance in which they did not find to their cost, that they had followed an *ignis fatuus*, which led them to disappointment and ruin. But the result of Mrs. Fisher's impulses were highly praiseworthy, leading to results so noble, involving a sacrifice of self, property, and everything. If all possessing property would follow her example, what a world of felicity we should witness! God is never at a loss to institute means to carry forward his purposes of grace or providence; else it would seem that if Mrs. Fisher had not been solicited to render assistance at that time, Methodism must have had to wait—who knows how long?—ere it would have been established in Lincoln.

It appears, by Mr. Watmough's history, that towards the latter end of the year 1787 (four years before I was born), Mrs. Fisher came to Lincoln, and invited the preachers to make it one of their regular preaching places. These circumstances were matters of rejoicing to the few individuals who were desirous to form themselves into a society. It is related, that “the first place of worship regularly occupied by the Methodists at Lincoln, was of a very humble description; the only place they could procure being a kind of old lumber room, near Gowts-bridge, which they put into as decent repair as they could.”

A society of four females was formed in this place, viz., Mrs. Fisher, Sarah Parrot, Hannah Calder, and Elizabeth Keyley; two of the four, Sarah Parrot and Hannah Calder, I knew very well. Many slanderous tales were reported of the simple-hearted females, forged by the father of lies no doubt. It was reported that John Wesley had got a lot of old women together, who frequently quarrelled and pulled one another's caps off, &c. But despite the rancour with which this “day of small and

feeble things" was viewed, it was destined to progress; as it has done, notwithstanding all the attempts made by men and devils to arrest its onward course. The hand of God was in it, and when He deigns to work, who can hinder? Their congregations were increased, and they had tolerably quiet meetings. This possibly might arise, partly from the fact, that the despicable make-shift place in which they assembled would fail to elicit public attention. Thus the little flock was hid from the wrath of man and fed by the kind Shepherd's own hand, and nursed by Him till it received strength to face a wicked and persecuting world. Much did they need the strengthening they received at this time.

It would seem that Mr. Watmough had heard of nothing worth recording, from the time of the little Society's meeting near Gowts'-bridge, and the opening of the new chapel, which was on the south side of the river opposite the Ship inn. Soon after the opening of the chapel, the Methodists were called to endure persecution in various forms. In introducing this subject I shall mention some things coming immediately under my own observation, leading to the adoption of some views in reference to the manner in which some, especially the females, were treated by the populace. I do seriously believe that, if our females had not been so ridiculous as to disguise themselves, by adopting modes of dress different from other people, they might have passed along very quietly.

I have recollections of some of the coarse jokes levelled at them as they passed; such as, "look there, do you see that;"—"there she goes with a coal tub on her head;"—"where's your religion, Mrs., when your bonnet's off?" Who can account for the vagaries of mind which lead men and women to disguise themselves after such a manner? What can possibly lie at the bottom of manners and mimicries, monkey tricks, which make men appear so ridiculous? What does it all mean? Why is the vanity allowed to live? Is it that the world may talk about them? We see, even in these days, as soon as a youngster gets it into his head, that he has found something about him which he ought to exhibit to the people, that he instantly assumes a white neckerchief—thus saying to every one, "look here, here's one who can teach you something." Can any man who has any respect for his understanding approve of anything that puts on

the guise of class foppery? Our Methodist friends who have allowed themselves to assume such disguising singularities must have greatly mistaken Mr. Wesley's sermon on dress. He looked upon any particular form or tendency to uniformity in dress, as reprehensible; urging them not to imitate the Quakers in the form of their bonnets or dimensions of their hats, &c., but to dress like others in common. He would have an Englishman dress like an Englishman, urging a middle course, and not to be carried along with every flirting whim of fashion. One might be led to suppose that these attempts of professors of religion to distinguish themselves from non-professors, had something in the holy scriptures to encourage such attempts. Where is that something to be found? Who can read what John Baptist says of Christ, and not be struck with the fact that, He was in appearance so like other men, that he says of Him, "There standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose." And John himself declares that he "knew him not," and that He was to be pointed out to him by a sign from heaven. In how many instances do we find Christ to be undistinguished among the mass of human beings? His disciples also were equally unknown by any outward semblances. Peter, when in the palace of the high-priest, was not pointed out by any peculiarity of appearance; but was judged to be one of his disciples from his Galilean dialect. I am not attempting to justify acts of persecution, let them be perpetrated under whatever pretences may be urged as excuses in justification of such infringements of the rights of man, as every man has a right to worship in what mode he pleases. I don't suppose, however, the persons who met together to worship at that time, were persecuted for righteousness, but as hypocrites and deceivers, for such was the plea made against them.

Some rather amusing incidents would at times occur in connection with the persecutions of the people. The following I recollect having frequently heard related. An old man, a patten-maker, working for Alderman Jepson, who occupied the premises now held by Mr. Cousans, *Chronicle* office. I shall not mention his name, as his race is not yet extinct. This old man was attempting to make a prayer in his way, which raised the irracibilities of an old lady (a quack-doctor's wife), living next

door to the chapel ; she rushed into the chapel, and slapped the old man's bald head with her open palm, which made the chapel ring again : such a thing would be rather a novelty now-a-days. I am not able to conjecture what could possibly be the cause of the woman's animosity : whether it was his shabby appearance, or something in connection with his morals, I cannot say. Another instance may be coupled with the above, though of a rather later date, which more distinctively showed the spirit of persecution and hatred to everything that wore even the semblance of godliness. In this instance, the man, a member of the Methodist society, had retired to bed ; being aroused by a loud knocking at the door or window, which induced him to throw up the window, and, looking out to inquire the cause of his being disturbed, when he forthwith receives a stroke on the head from a long pole, with this salutation, "There, Tommy, take that ; now thee get in, say your prayers, and go to bed again."

We will try to contrast the conduct of these individuals towards the Methodists with their conduct towards a drunken, wicked parson, who lodged in the parish of St. Mary-le-Wigford. This was a fine specimen of a man, to look at, and the devil must have felt proud to have so brave a champion enlisted under his black banner. This man, who had no respect for his character, would associate with the lowest of the low, but he was never persecuted for his ungodliness ; he was a

"Brave old English gentleman, one of the olden time."

and in their opinion fit for all time. A very dissolute character, who went by the appellation of "Jack the Painter." was his constant companion in his fishing and other pleasure excursions. When he had to go to Bracebridge or other places to preach, he commonly contrived to take with him one or two of his chums to take part in his potations. He often made a merit of forcing his horse past the ale-houses where it was accustomed to stop, and then to turn, saying, "I think we deserve a pint for that, let us turn back and have one." On one occasion, having been preaching at Bracebridge, he asked the man who accompanied him, what he thought of his sermon, he said, "Oh, I thought it ferry eud (for so that man used to pronounce those words), but I thought you cot ferry dry, for I seed you look ferry hard several times at the

public-house." "Ho, ho, ho, did you ? Well, we'll go and try if we can't manage a quart." I could weep when I think of so fine a man becoming so bewildered and corrupt. He was not, to my knowledge, a persecutor. He did not trouble himself with such matters. Carnal was he,—a stranger to righteousness,—sold under sin,—the devil's own willing slave,—his son he was, and his works he always did. This man gave it out on his death-bed that he should like to recover just to give them one real drunken sermon from the words, "Drink no longer water ; take a little wine for thy stomach's sake." I saw this old wretch's funeral, which took place at St. Mary's church—quite a spectacle —his pall was borne by ten or a dozen persons. Who can even surmise what amount of evil would accrue to society from such a man's example ! And to hear the burial service read over such an one ! Thank God ! we have not many such persons now-a-days—but many there are whom we delight to respect and honour. May God multiply them abundantly ; the churches will, no doubt, be well filled everywhere where the pulpits are filled by worthy men.

The following remarks refer to the outward phases of Methodism in Lincoln and the surrounding Circuit, showing its continuance and increase in almost every place it has visited. A very cursory view will be taken of these matters.

Newton-on-Trent appears to be the first place which received Methodism in this neighbourhood ; this was nearly fifty years before any Society in connection therewith was known to exist in Lincoln. It is said that a Society was in existence at Newton before the year 1750 ; no mention is made of the number of its members : the only thing about it that appears definite is, that a Mrs. Skelton opened her house to admit the people who wished to meet for worship, for which she was subjected to great persecution. This pious individual died in the faith of the Gospel ; her death being a most triumphant one.

The next place in order of time is North Scarle. It is not positively said when the Society was originated here ; it, no doubt, existed before the year 1759, as a ticket, signifying membership, was found in the possession of a person named Storr. Mr. Wesley was known to preach here in 1759, which would make it appear that the Society had existed some time previously. A Mr. Arden, who had heard Mr. Wesley preach in Moorfields, is supposed to have introduced Methodism into this village.

Besthorpe and Girton are the next places, where Societies are said to have been in existence in 1770. It is supposed that Mr. Wesley visited Newton and Besthorpe about the same time, or the Besthorpe people went to Newton to hear him preach. He commends these people collectively for their artless and loving dispositions; could he determine so much in their favour from a pop visit? We see in this, however, the goodness of his own heart. The numbers in connection with these Societies are not mentioned.

Scothorne and Nettleham received Methodism before it was put into any form at Lincoln. It is said that a Mary Daubney, a poor widow with several children, in 1779, having got her soul blessed by hearing preaching somewhere, invited some preachers to preach in her house at Scothorne; whence the preachers came whom she invited is not stated. This pious widow removed from Scothorne to Nettleham, where she introduced the Gospel, as well as in the former place; she was a member in the two places above-named for more than fifty years. She returned to Scothorne, where she spent her last days on earth; she died in the faith in the ninety-fifth year of her age.

The above are the only places in the Lincoln Circuit where Methodism had taken a position and held it, up to the year 1780, or a little more, though the itinerants had preached in the county almost forty years. Societies were said to be existant about the time above-mentioned at Broxholme and Sturton; but no record exists to show the time of their commencement or of the numbers of members in Society. Three local preachers were raised up in this quarter; two at Broxholme and one at Sturton: at Broxholme, Mr. William Mawer, (the father of the late William Mawer, of Lincoln,) and a Mr. Joseph Frith; at Sturton, Mr. Wm. Flintham. There is no boast made of the literary acuirements of the above individuals; but that they were men of sound judgment, and had a right knowledge of the Gospel, and had ability to teach its doctrines, will appear from the satisfactory statements of those who were said to have profited by their ministrations.—One of them, Mr. Mawer, was evidently possessed with a poetic genius, as a few lines, extracted from a longer piece, found among his papers will shew,—

“ Come, into my heart,
And never depart;

Ah, leave me no more !
 Thou know'st that I love Thee ;
 Thy name I adore !
 I hope to remove
 To the mansions above,
 On Thy beauty to gaze,
 And fall prostrate before Thee,
 In wonder and praise.
 How amazed shall I be,
 When my Jesus I see,
 In glory appear !
 What a wonder of wonders
 If I should be there !

About the time of Mrs. Fisher's appearing in Lincoln, an attempt was made to preach the Gospel in Navenby, a rude and dark place at that time; scarcely were the people raised above the brutes in the knowledge of spiritual things—they knew nothing of them. An old man who had got some little knowledge of God, in consequence of having heard some of the strangers sent there to preach the quickening Word of God, was found by his son on his knees praying. This worse than brutish son kicked and cursed him, saying, “What the d—l are you ‘kewlimiting’* about.” A Mrs. Watkinson appears to have been the principal instrument, favouring the introduction of Methodism into this place.—This brave female who, it appears, was converted at Louth, in settling at Navenby, had to submit to most cruel persecution and ill treatment; both her person and property were frequently assailed and injured.—

Will those smooth-tongued gentlemen, who say that human nature is not fallen, please to account for the fact that all go the wrong way? If what they say be true, all must have a bias to that which is like God; how is it destroyed? Can those who boast of the greatness and goodness of human nature, and who put into the mouths of their dupes to sing,

“Thy noblest creatures worship Thee !”

produce a character like this? The Great God must no doubt feel very much obliged to such, for their humbling themselves so much as to pay Him such an acknowledgement. Here is a poor feeble woman at Navenby, acknowledges that she has no strength but what Jesus gives her, surrounded by a herd of two-legged

* A term of reproach used in reference to Methodists at that time and long after; its origin is not known.

brutes, having the outward form of men, receiving from them almost all kinds of indignities: and yet she flinches not. Can you find anything like this amongst your fine specimens of glorious human nature! Oh! she had

“ The zeal in which the martyrs glow'd,
Dying champions for their God !”

This pious female was the means of converting a Mr. Hazard, a man of property. This person succeeded in securing the services of the Wesleyan preachers who, from Lincoln, went to visit Navenby. Mr. Hazard, though in worldly position equal to his rich neighbours, was not, from that circumstance, screened from the malice of the haters of Methodism; they assailed and destroyed his property in various ways. When the preachers whom he had invited, came to Navenby, they were most shamefully treated by the populace; rotten eggs and the filthiest rubbish were cast at them, till the colour of their clothes could scarcely be determined. The farmers encouraged these perverse children of all ages in their reckless career, giving them strong drink and other rewards. “ The dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty.”

A light was raised up for Boothby in the person of a John Mayfield, who had got converted by hearing the gospel preached in the first Lincoln chapel; he appears to have been a man who had for a long time, previously to his conversion, striven to get into the way of pleasing and living to God, seeking light in every place, and under various kinds of preaching, where he supposed he might obtain the object of his honest wishes. The Methodist doctrine seemed to determine his choice, as it engaged his whole soul through life. Poor John was fated to receive no better treatment in his parish than Mrs. Watkinson had met with at Navenby, though the strength of soul he had by the Holy Ghost obtained, and by which he was sustained, made him capable of enduring all things. The power a man receives when he receives Christ, makes him think lightly of all that he is called to endure for His sake. John had a master whom he loved, but he could not do with his religion. His master was conscious of John's faithfulness, he was everything that could be wished for as a servant, but his religion was to him intolerable; what he saw in John no doubt stirred up the mind of a conscience

which had long been at ease. The twitches which this meddlesome thing, when aroused, would lead him to be avenged on John, whom, though found to be faithful, he actually discharged from his service, and used means to get him ejected from the little land he held. A conspiracy among the farmers made against John was thought to be so clever, that it could not fail to destroy Methodism root and branch from Boothby, and leave them once more in possession of their carnal security. The rent day was at hand. The conspirators made themselves quite sure that they should succeed in getting John discharged, when they informed the steward that John had made the house in which he lived a conventicle. Several, in the course of the day, attempted to put this into the steward's ears, but he always appeared as if he would not, or could not, understand them. The steward was informed that John was to preach that night. When the time arrived that John must speak for his Master, whose business he was always ready to be about, the steward expressed a wish to hear him, requesting the farmers to accompany him; of course they would scarcely be able to guess the result of this project. It would probably be a matter to them of hope and fear. When John had concluded the meeting, the steward was pleased to express his approbation of John and his doings in the most encouraging terms. This put such a damper on John's enemies as neither they nor John expected. This stroke had such a withering effect on these serpents, that their poison seemed to diminish ever after; so that John lived down all prejudice, and became in the end as much respected and honoured as he had been before despised. "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Harby, it appears, was visited in 1792. The populace here had recourse to a novel mode in their intention of preventing the Methodists from obtaining a footing. They flocked to the parish church, intending thereby, I suppose, that the Methodists when they came, might have none to preach to. For it would seem, from the dread they had of Methodism, that it would entail all kinds of evils upon them; and that men running about talking of God, hell and heaven, were tokens of dreadful judgment, or of the great day itself being at hand. One man, who it seems had learned his letters and could read a few words, gave it out that he was able to confute the preacher, and took his bible under his

arm to the meeting, with the intent of stopping the preacher's mouth, by arguments deduced from the scriptures. But the poor muff never got his mouth once opened, becoming the laughing-stock of the mob. Mr. Hannah, of Lincoln, made his first attempt at preaching here on Christmas-day, 1793. Mr. Joseph Mawer and Mr. Hannah were residents of Lincoln at that time, being the only two local preachers residing in the city. These two individuals met with most disgusting ill-treatment in most of the country towns they preached in. Excellent men they were, whom nothing could deter from prosecuting the work they had chosen to perform.

In visiting and re-visiting some of the above-mentioned places, Mr. Mawer and Mr. Hannah had great persecution and hardship. On the 22nd of April, 1796, Mr. Hannah visited Welbourn, intending to preach at Wellingore on his return, but the mob assailed him, while at prayer, forcing him to desist, driving him with his companions before them for the space of a mile, uttering most awful imprecations, the while pelting them with stones and brickbats.

Besthorpe and Girton, which two places, from their nearness to each other, had formed but one society, had built a chapel as early as the year 1794. This was the third chapel built in the Lincoln circuit. These places appear to have had many difficulties to contend with, their quiet being disturbed by individuals who were resolved to sow seeds of discord among the people, attempting to spread the soul-paralysing doctrine of personal unconditional election and reprobation. When the people became sick of the langour that this send-to-sleep doctrine had induced, they were soon revived and cheered, and many were added to their numbers—such would never have taken place under the doctrine by which they had been disturbed.

North Scarle, though one of the first places visited by Methodism, seems to have remained at a dead-lock. In 1798 nothing is mentioned of any chapel or of any number of members in Society. I expect there was no Society.

Mr. Hannah had preached at Thorpe-on-the-Hill before the year 1797, as on the 19th of March in that year, he forms a Society of twelve members.

In 1799 a Society was formed at Spalford, but no number of members recorded.

South Clifton is mentioned as being visited. A Society no doubt there was, as a Master Pool is mentioned as being one of its leading members.

In 1802 a chapel is said to have been built either at Eagle or at Harby but the demonstrative adjective pronouns are so badly applied in the scheme I have before me, that I cannot determine to which of the places they point.

Bassingham, it appears, received the quickening word in 1801; this was in consequence of a Mr. Dixon, a resident of the place, having become a convert to Methodism, and who, we doubt not, had become acquainted with the true grace of God. He and a Mr. Rogers of the same place, having kindred views, agreed to invite the Methodist preachers to preach at Bassingham; Mr. Rogers' house was immediately licensed for the purpose of worship and preaching. The opening of this house for divine worship was attended with much good; Mr. Dixon, though warm in temperament, was an excellent man; he was made leader of the Society raised up there. The house thus dedicated soon became too small; then a barn was fitted up, and shortly after this, a chapel was generously built by Mr. Dixon, as he was well able to do so; this chapel was opened in 1802. About the same time the brave Mr. Hazard, of Navenby, built a chapel in his own town, that would hold five hundred people, and at his own expense too.—Who can wonder at the prosperity of Methodism, which has men like the above connected with it? The last-mentioned also left one hundred pounds to support the cause after his death: all will say, I doubt not, that such an example is a safe one for all to follow who have plenty of property.

The village of Aubourn is the next place, visited at the time of the building of the two chapels last mentioned; Mr. Dixon's zeal, after his conversion, led him thither.—The kingdom of heaven, when it enters into a man, will be found to be a leaven that will work while there is anything to be leavened by it.

In the same year, an attempt was made to introduce Methodism into Waddington, which attempt succeeded, a Society being formed. The small Society at Waddington prospered very well till it was placed in the hands of the Rev. Richard Sibthorp, who was then the minister of the parish. It was thought right as he was then a pious and zealous preacher, to leave the cause

with him. They found, when he had to leave the place, that they had to begin the work afresh. He had neither kept them that were left with him, nor added any new members.—Our church parsons don't know how to keep believers alive somehow, I don't understand how it is. Mr. Sibthorp collected the weekly moneys as we had done, but gave them to the Bible Society.

Numbers in the different Societies in 1806: in Lincoln, 150; Sleaford, 42; Navenby, 61; Boothby, 68; Aubourn, 23; Thorpe-on-the-Hill, 28; Bassingham had given 8 members to Stapleford, where a Society had been formed, leaving 20 Members at the former place. In the course of five years, the number of Societies had risen from 15 to 23; a rise from 400 to 640 members.

On the 27th of March died Mr. Watson, of Scothorn, who had been a leader and local preacher for thirty-six years. This gentleman was the father of Mr. Edward Watson, of Lincoln. He became one of the Trustees for the first chapel built at Lincoln. He was said to have been a very consistent and worthy character; he, however, left no account of his views or experience.

From the year 1805 to 1812, four local preachers had been called out from the Lincoln Circuit into the regular ministry; their absence from the Circuit must have been severely felt.

In the year 1808, Saxilby was first visited, and a Society formed there. The first preaching at that place was in the open air.

About the same time, preaching was introduced into Barlings, principally through the influence of Mr. Lamb, who had an estate in that place. The services were afterwards transferred to Langworth, where they have ever since remained.

In 1810, meetings were held at Branston, in the house of Mr. John Grimes; a small Society was formed there. Soon afterwards a chapel was built, the cause moving on progressively.

In 1811, Welton was tried again, with better success than attended Mr. Hannah's attempts some years before. From 1811 to 1815, a considerable number of members was added, a stirring influence being witnessed among the people generally.

Bassingham, it is said, was benefitted by this stirring influence, but no number, showing any increase of church members, is stated.

About the same time, an increase of five members is recorded to have taken place at Aubourn; at Eagle, an increase of nine;

at Welton, nine; at Lincoln, in four years from 1812, one hundred and six members were added to the Society.

At the time of this apparent prosperity, Mr. W. Mawer went to Heighington, and attempted to preach there, but a man with a loaded gun stood in the doorway of the house in which Mr. Mawer intended to preach, telling him he would shoot him if he came forward; but Mr. Mawer having no fancy for the reception of lead, thought it better to turn his back, and cut—thinking the fool might be in earnest. It was long before a footing could be obtained in this rude place.

In 1813, the work generally had become so heavy as to make it necessary to engage the assistance of a fourth preacher, who would, no doubt, have work enough to do.

On December 5th, 1814, the death of the indefatigable John Dixon, of Bassingham, is recorded to have taken place.—A man of a most ardent spiritual temperament, but whose weakness of body oft gave us pain to witness; we saw he could not last long, though a long life to such a man was greatly to be desired—his attachment to God's cause, and his love for souls, being so manifest; our fears for his case were mournfully realized. May our God send many like him into His vineyard! He did much in a short time. What fools such as he must have been, if Calvinism be true, which says that not a soul more will be saved on account of all the efforts made by men to that end, than if no exertions had been made at all! and yet men of this persuasion have the impudence to stand up in pulpits, and take money of the people for their useless announcements. Our Lord says, “Go ye out into the world, and preach the gospel to every creature;” did they say, “They will just do as well without preaching as with it; we had better keep still, as by all we shall not succeed in persuading one soul to believe?”

The growing prosperity of the cause of Methodism in South Clifton, rendered it necessary to build a chapel there; this was in 1814. A Mr. Higgatt, of whom it was said that “the Methodists would ruin him,” had been so blessed in his worldly circumstances, that he was able to give land whereon to build the chapel, and to assist them with money as well. This man died there in peace, where this evidence of his willingness to help forward the work of God appears.

In 1815, a chapel was built at Nettleham, which was opened

on the 19th of March. Another, built at Welton, was opened on the day following. The raising of chapels in the villages speaks well for the power of religion: when the heart is enlarged, the money, where it is possessed, will be found to be used to good purpose.

In the same year the second Methodist chapel in Lincoln, was finished and opened in June—a convenient and commodious place, situated in what is now called Bank Street. The inimitable Richard Watson was one of the preachers employed at its opening; his presence drew a crowded audience; his voice and sweetly-flowing eloquence would attract always and anywhere. This great man was despised by the brainless herd, when it was known that he had become a preacher. I believe as a preacher he had no superior.

A rapidly increasing prosperity attended Methodism after the opening of this chapel, which, though large, soon became too small for its amazing growth. It always was, and we hope always will be, a go-a-head system. And so it ought to be, calling to every one without any double meaning:—"Come to the living waters, and drink and live for ever."

It appears that Normanton, before 1814, had had preaching for fifty or sixty years. The numbers in Society in 1801 were fourteen, and but fifteen in 1814. Poor encouragement this for those who had laboured so long in this place!

The indefatigable Mr. Hannah, who visited Metheringham in 1801, met with better success; at first he met with a coarse reception. His first sermon was preached in the street. Afterwards a poor man living in a town house, allowed the preachers to preach within his doors, till a more convenient place was procured. In the same year a Society was formed, consisting of 22 members. In 1803 they had 25 members; the next year 31; in 1808 their number was 44. This was pleasingly encouraging.

The village of Martin was visited in 1807. Neither church nor chapel existed there. The people there were indeed "left as sheep not having a shepherd." A person named Andrew was the first who took in the preachers; he was one of Colonel King's tenants. Mr. Andrew applied to the Colonel for land to build a chapel on. He cheerfully granted his request, expressing his pleasure that any persons were inclined to teach and to do

good. He might know something about Methodism, as he was acquainted with 'Squire Brackenbury, who used to preach in our pulpits; I once heard the above-mentioned individual preach in our little chapel, Waterside-south. I thought he looked as if he pitied the preacher, who was made of exciteable stuff.

Methodism seemed to tell but poorly for a long time on Sleaford. But in 1814 the number of members was 44.

Broughton had been visited frequently before 1812 to very little purpose, as preaching could not be established there for lack of a suitable place. The Quakers had a place there, but they refused to allow our preachers the use of it under any conditions.

From that time forward a steadiness of purpose, showing the presence and proper development of true gospel principles appeared—which things will inevitably show themselves. Where the understanding is well informed, or so far informed as to lead those who have received the grace of God to judge to what extent the experience they suppose they have of the work of the Spirit upon their minds, may be relied on, by considering the effects they observe in their own souls, and how far the effects they observe in relation to their profession may be trusted as being the real work of God.

Number of members in the Methodist Societies in the year 1814 :—Lincoln, 281; Newton, 19; Scarle, 19; Besthorpe and Girton, 26; Scothorne, 11; Nettleham, 29; Ingham and Fillingham, 27; Spalford and South Clifton, 92; Navenby, 12; Thorpe, 17; Harby, 25; Bassingham, 47; Normanton, 15; Kelby, 0; Sleaford, 44; Eagle, 23; Metheringham, 40; Aubourn, 31; Waddington, 9; Stapleford, 0; Fenton and Laughterton, 16; Skellingthorpe, 0; Martin, 25; Saxilby, 25; Barlings, 0; Welton, 26; Branston, 9; and Broughton, 14. Another scale I am about to introduce will show a still more rapid increase of Methodism. This estimate was made just twelve years after the above. The numbers, as they here stand, were entered into the circuit book in August, 1824 :—Lincoln, 428; Aubourn, 31; Bassingham, 62; Stapleford, 9; Swinderby, 19; South Scarle, 10; Besthorpe, 21; Girton, 11; North Scarle, 42; Spalford, 12; South Clifton, 15; North Clifton, 13; Newton, 13; Fenton and Laughterton, 12; Saxilby, 29; Harby, 27; Eagle, 40; Thorpe, 14; Waddington, 21; Harmston, 14;

Branston, 17; Heighington, 23; Nettleham, 37; Langworth, 21; Scothorn, 11; Welton, 23; Fillingham, 25; Ingham, 22; Carlton, 17; Skellingthorpe, 8: total, 1047.

My object for producing these numbers is, to show my firm persuasion that Methodism is a system that will progress whilst it retains most of its primitive elements; I shall hereafter produce other data bearing upon the same subject, showing perhaps a more rapid and growing increase than is seen in the above.—Before I do this, I must indulge a few thoughts that will intrude themselves upon my recollections, though their subjects are of a widely-different character.

O Death, what a monster thou art! I see before me as it were a field of corn, levelled by thy ruthless scythe, with here and there an ear, which, by accident, has escaped thy fell stroke. I go into our first little chapel, and look round on scores of faces, whose features I can see nearly as distinctly as if I had them now before me; but none of these could be now recognized, as death and the grave have annihilated their distinctiveness; henceforth I shall know them no more.

Three months ago, Mr. John Vickers was among the ears which death's sweeping scythe had left behind, but the monster, not satisfied with a sweeping crop, returned to glean amongst the stubble, and picking him up, has deprived us of the sight of him ever since. He had been a Methodist for more than sixty years, and perhaps a more consistent and thorough-going church member cannot be found. He was also a class-leader and local preacher as well; though when I first knew him, which was about fifty-seven years ago, he, with great difficulty, succeeded in making out a few sentences in a plain or easy part of the Scriptures. A man's defective knowledge of such matters does not prevent him from working for God, when God has first wrought on him, inspiring him with the spirit and genius of the Holy Gospel, which breathes good-will to all. His assistance was often required and rendered to the chapel and school funds, —he being well able, in the last twenty years of his life, to be a liberal contributor.

Another one escaping death's awful instrument is the incomparable Mrs. Bainbridge, whose green and cheerful old age is observed with admiration; she has been a member of the Wesleyan Society sixty-four years.

The remaining one who joined the Society at the later period of 1808, is Dr. Hannah, of whom I have made some remarks; he is so well known, and so well spoken of, as to render it unnecessary for me to add a syllable.

I have now myself to speak of, being the only other male alive that connected himself with the Wesleyans in 1808; but, as I have nothing to say of myself, I shall not take a trumpet into my hand, to trumpet forth nothing and be laughed at for my trouble.

When I look at the tremendous sweep that death has made of my fellows, it reminds me of the alarming distress to which the Egyptians were subjected on that awfully memorable night, when there was not a house in which there was not one dead. I cannot now point to every house, and say of it, "here such a one died," for the multiplying of houses has bewildered me—but I can say of whole neighbourhoods, that I cannot find one alive whom I knew seventy years ago, with the exception of Robert Nixon, who was a member of the Methodist Society some years before myself, although he was not a member at the time when I joined, nor for many years after. When Mr. Nixon held his little property, which he had the misfortune to lose by a lawsuit, there was not, nor could be, perhaps, a better neighbour than he.—I grieve to see him fallen so low; but, thank God, Bobby always meets one with a smile, and never fails to say, "We shall soon be at home." When I refer to Mr. Nixon, I class him among those I had known in St. Mary's Lane, where he lived when I was a very little boy.—He is the only individual alive out of great numbers whom I could name, and of whom I have a perfect recollection. The same signs of mortality meet me everywhere, but more especially in old localities; I look in vain for old well-known faces. But it is useless to dwell on the mournful, nobody will dispute the facts I state; I shall not be at the unpleasant trouble of visiting every place of sepulture in our city, just for the unprofitable pleasure of discovering a few of the little mounds which show their resting places.

I shall now seize upon a few thoughts which rush upon me of a^{more} more pleasing character. These thoughts carry me backwards more than sixty years; they refer to Methodists, and to some pleasing recollections of Methodism, before I was much

acquainted with it. No doubt I shall forget many things which, if remembered, might be of some interest. The things which just pop upon me have been nearly buried for many years.

I happened to reside two doors from the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, the parents of the late Mr. Edward Holmes, bootmaker, of the High Bridge, and of Mrs. Talbot, near the Blue Anchor. The appearance and conduct of these two individuals were so different from what I observed among the rest of the neighbours, as to interest me much in their favour. Some of the females used to visit them occasionally, and together they would sing some of their beautiful tunes, which, when sung in their pious and impressive manner, with their full and fine voices (so contrary to the rant of songs so often heard), rendered it, to me, perfectly enchanting. I knew one of the singers by name whom I heard at that time, Mary Boole—perhaps the aunt of Professor Boole, of whom so much has been said and written of late; one of the tunes I then heard sung I recollect perfectly, in most singing books its name is “Plymouth Dock”—this tune was much liked, and much sung for many years; it was most admirably adapted to devotional singing. There was no froth or lightness about those persons when singing,—they sung to the “praise and glory of God.” Of course, in those days they sung but one part, and yet there was something about it which, I could fancy, surpassed what we hear now-a-days.—This view of it may arise, perhaps, from the pleasure I felt in hearing what to me was so unusual, and probably from the high appreciation I had of the persons singing, for they were most worthy individuals, and such they continued through their lives. Their deportment was such as none could reprove, if I were able to judge of it.—I often wonder what such would say of the coarse romping which is sometimes witnessed in some of our young people after a public tea meeting, especially in the country; there may be no real harm in what appears so innocent; yet it must be said, that it is not very decorous in those who are commanded to be “circumspect in all things.” The persons I before alluded to were approached with a kind of reverence, being well understood as persons of real character—whose profession and conduct were one as it were, the one did not belie the other.

I have before referred to the respect such won for Methodism

in general—I am not going to insinuate that everything which has attached itself to Methodism has been equally pleasing or profitable; we have sometimes been plagued with half-witted and dreamy individuals, who were no credit to their profession. A man who was amongst us some time, had allowed strange notions to get into his head: this person gave it out that the Holy Spirit, in some bodily form, forced itself into his chest, and moved about in him till it compelled him cry to out, “Abba, Father!” He used to sit in the congregation, heaving and twitching about, saying “Ab, Ab, Ab, Abba.” Instances of fanaticism, like the above, are distressing to witness, and, besides, religion itself is blamed as being the cause of such weaknesses.

We have likewise been sometimes troubled with weak-headed women, who have shown such freaks, and put themselves into such unaccountable phrenesies as were calculated to turn the heads of some timid people; their wild looks and screams witnessing the disordered state of their brains; all such things are drawbacks to that even flow of prosperity we ought to expect, where the truth is preached in love. I will venture to say that anyone who shall come in contact with this sort of individuals, will find that their rambling talk is very similar to that we hear among the patients of a lunatic asylum—they are full of large notions of *themselves*; *their* virtues, holiness, and everything about them is of a marvellous cast; they will tell you of some distinctive signs of the superiority they had observed in themselves from childhood.—I have myself known such to show their wrists, pointing out some signs of superior blood flowing in their veins, from which they account for the wonders they conceive to accompany them. They will speak of their marvellous dreams and visions of heaven or hell; what they see of heaven is something like the paltry representations of some ignorant artist, who has ventured to cram heaven into the area of a few square yards, with a figure enthroned, surrounded with a few little creatures with wings. All this shows a weak and dreamy brain, influenced more by fancy than reason. The views of such, when employed in reference to the place or state of glory, are very much like those of an old woman I once saw in the Minster, peeping into the choir through the gate under the organ, (of course, the place was too fine for her to enter,) stretching forth her neck and lifting up both her hands, exclaimed, “Oh! it’s just like heaven.”

What a shame that human beings, capable of continued mental growth, should be kept children all their lives ! That poor thing, found peeping into the choir, had never been taught by the parsons to know her worth, hence her poor soul was imposed upon by gaudy appearances, and was equally as incapable of judging rightly of things as the half-idiots we have mentioned above.

But, let me not forget that I am to confine myself principally to my own recollections of Methodism and Methodists in Lincoln. Let me just remark, however, that I find the age of seventy-four rather too far advanced in the winter of life, to be congenial to a first attempt at putting thoughts on paper, expecting the same to be seen by other eyes beside my own. It is, nevertheless, a matter of little consequence whether I succeed to my own or others' satisfaction, or to the satisfaction of neither, as I have no name to lose, and care not a straw for honor.

I shall now proceed to make some observations from my recollections of female servants. The consistent conduct of many of these went a great way towards removing prejudices conceived in ignorance against the Methodists as a body.—They proved to be the best of servants, staying longer in their places than other servants, and hereby bringing honor to their profession ; they were not eye-servants, but doing their duty faithfully, as the servants of Christ, won to themselves golden honors, commanding themselves to every man's conscience. Many of these I know were hired year after year, for several years together, to the same masters and mistresses, many of whom, though not friendly to religion, had wisdom enough to prefer those whom they knew would look well to their household affairs, and to whom their property might be unscrupulously trusted. We have an instance, however, to record which must assume a phase dissimilar to the above, about which I remember to have heard a good deal of chattering and whispering ; it had reference to a female who attended the Methodist Chapel, Water-side-south ; I am not certain that she was a member of the Society. This person lived with an old lady named Reynolds, who then occupied the large brick house above the Greestone Steps, fronting the south, on the left hand, when going towards the Minster. For some reason, the servant of this woman had written on the blank leaf of one of her own books, “I saw

an angel;" her mistress happening to take up the book, and seeing the above words, became violently enraged, and staring the servant in the face, exclaimed, "And *I see a devil!*"—I mention this little incident, because it would seem that there was something in the conduct of this person which was not consistent with her religious profession, and naturally elicits the following remark, viz., that if professors of religion would promote the cause they espouse, their profession and conduct must be uniform.—The world expects it, and will not tolerate anything that comes short of this, whatever they may excuse in others. It is just possible, however, that the rancour manifested by the old lady against her servant, might arise purely out of the dislike she had conceived against religious professors in general, for nothing, to my knowledge, transpired to implicate her servant in anything that was seriously culpable. There is such a thing as being disliked, and of being "persecuted for righteousness' sake." If servants will look as much to Christ to assist them in their duties, as their employers look for their fidelity and trustworthiness, they will not fail to approve themselves in the sight of God and man.—"My grace is sufficient for thee," belongs to every station.

I have recollections of certain young men, who, sixty-seven or sixty-eight years ago, were in the habit of visiting some of the lowest and dirtiest families in St. Mary's Lane; these self-denying individuals, though respectably dressed themselves, would sit and read in those loathsome places for an hour or more; I remember having heard one of them myself, reading in one of the most filthy places a person could put his head into. I have good reason for making remarks of this sort respecting this place, for, at a little later period to that mentioned above, I used to steal into this stinking place, to hear an old man, who was a lodger, read the "Pilgrim's Progress." This poor creature, who had had his back injured, and who had sat in a chair for forty years, was one of the most cheerful of human beings, he would sit singing from morning to night, winding and cutting cotton for candle-wicks. His cheerfulness attracted many boys, who would often leave their play to hear Old Nat tell his amusing tales.

How perverse I must have been at that time! how wilful and obstinate! what lies I must have told! for, though so

strictly charged to keep away from Old Nat's, there I would be if possible, and, though I got severely thrashed, I still would venture to go.

Few of the young men who joined the Methodists at the time when they were so severely hooted and persecuted, fell away; I have knowledge but of one. This person, more full of himself than of the Holy Ghost, would exhort and attempt to preach; whether this young aspirant, who, no doubt, had surrounded himself with sparks of his own kindling, failed to swell himself to the size which his vanity had prompted him to imagine, I cannot say, but this I know, he gave his more steadfast brethren the slip, and became their violent persecutor. This would be about the year 1800.

Some of the worst of people, from various motives, get connected with churches: I will mention one well-practised in the art of disguise and duplicity.—This deceiver, the better to carry on her treacherous practices, had assumed what was called “the Quaker's,” or “Methodist bonnet,” the coaltub-formed thing referred to previously, This snivelling old creature, the moment she got sight of any person she intended to impose upon, the muscles of her face would fall most mechanically, showing how well she was habituated to the art of deceiving; she used to carry a few greens or potatoes in a basket, apparently with the intention of selling them, but the prime object for taking the basket was, that she might take it home well stowed with what she begged; for, though she always pleaded poverty and want, it was found by those who attended her on her death-bed, that the house was “pragged” with every kind of necessary, and with many superfluities—wine, liquors, tea, sugar, soap, and almost every imaginable thing, and she had a good deal of money hid about the house; so that we may suppose that, if it was wet weather only that was to be provided for, she would not have failed to have begged plenty of umbrellas.—Well, though I have written these things which I know to be true of her, I do not feel inclined to gnash my teeth at her, knowing that I am myself a frail creature, liable to err. I would rather indulge the hope that much that I have related arose more out of weakness and wrong views, than from sheer hypocrisy: the Holy Gospel urges us to think the best we can of all.

Sixty years ago, the Lincoln Methodists were a very zealous

and hearty people: they were so from a deep conviction of the truth of the doctrines they professed to believe, so that, when they met together to worship, they met in the full assurance of faith, believing that they should receive the things they were instructed by the Scriptures to pray for. They believed that when the Scriptures say "Repent, and believe the Gospel" that it says this to beings who can, by God's grace, attend to what it says. They believed that what Christ said, He would do, when He should be lifted up from the earth; that He meant what He said, "I will draw all men unto me," He meant *all* men, and not a small number; they believed that, when Paul says, "Now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent," he means all men, and that all men, by the grace of God, can render obedience to that command; or of what use can it be? Will God trifle with men after that manner? and shall man be allowed to upbraid God with imposing on him what He knows to be an impossibility? This, they believed, would be as ridiculous, as it was of the servant to charge God with being a hard master, who gathered where he strewed not, and who reaped where he had not sowed, though he had received goods of his Lord, which he tried not to make advantage of, but went and hid them in the earth. They believed that such things as these were written for their instruction, and were intended to be incentives to diligence, assuring themselves that the figure our Lord employs, in the matter of the improvement of the talents, was not intended to send men to sleep. They were not among those who believe in the unconditional election and reprobation of individuals; they believed, with Paul, that all true believers were elected, and that none were elected before they became believers; and that none were reprobated but those who had made shipwreck of faith and of a good conscience.—Don't turn up the lip at this doctrine; for I will prove it to be St. Paul's own doctrine, and, in doing this, I will not make a large circuit, like the legal Jews who went *about* to establish their own righteousness, rather than submit themselves to the righteousness of God by faith, and so become the children of Abraham. They who dream of an unconditional election and reprobation, have mistaken Paul's argument, running right through his Epistle to the Romans, in which he shews the impartiality of both, in his purpose of justifying both Jews and Gentiles without the works

of the law ; they think they see something of favouritism in the words, " Whom he did foreknow" (that is, they who in old time believed as Abraham did,) " he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son," whom they acknowledged in their faith, as did Abraham, " that he might be the firstborn among many brethren," both Jews and Gentiles, for Abraham saw the death and resurrection of Christ in what occurred on Mount Moriah ; he was let into God's secret by the figure brought before him in the instance of the offering of his son Isaac,—yes, he saw the day of Christ ; he saw Him offered as the world's great atonement ; yes, he saw how in Him all the families of the earth should be blessed. And, again, " whom He did predestinate" (that is, they who in old time had a special call for a special purpose, that a general purpose might succeed,) " He also called," that is, subjected them to the same means by which He intended to save every individual son of Adam, for surely none were ever justified before they believed. Now that faith was understood and acted upon by the individuals mentioned in this passage is clear, or they could not have been justified, sanctified, and glorified, as stated. If any notions had ever existed in the Apostle's head of any election except that of faith, he never would have said, " If any man will not love the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed !" They that " love God are the called according to his purpose," that is, they who having obeyed the call, have got saved ; so we perceive it to be a condition, rather than persons, which is referred to.—You will, perhaps, enquire, was it not a personal thing in the case of Jacob and Esau, when the younger was preferred before the elder ? Certainly it was, but that affair had nothing to do with the salvation of either of them. God had a right to do as he pleased, in giving preference to one rather than another, the reason for which we have no business to enquire after ; Esau was rich in blessings, though God was pleased to choose Jacob rather than he, to be a link in the chain of progenitors down to the Messiah. There was nothing in all this that deprived Esau of anything promised to the world in Paradise, nor to anything promised to Abraham and his seed. He stood on the same footing as Jacob did, with respect to the law of life which was in Christ Jesus—this belongs to every soul that ever did live, or ever will live ; every individual surely is interested in the glad tidings

announced by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem, “Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” The Methodists will never lose their ardour, whilst they believe that the angel who had the everlasting Gospel to preach, preached it to all them that dwell on the earth, and that whosoever will may take of the water of life freely.

I recollect, a little after the time that myself and another young man or two had joined the Methodist Society, a man of the High Calvinist cast, seeing us regularly attending the meetings, would put himself in our way, when going to or returning from the chapel. This man, instead of encouraging us in our attempts to flee from the wrath to come, did all he could to dishearten and turn us out of the way; calling us “work-mongers, self-saviours,” and so forth. He told us it was “not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth,” as if that Scripture had anything to do with the salvation of the souls of men; who does not see, if he is not wilfully blind, that those Scriptures refer to temporalities, and exclude none from the promise made to Abraham, that in his seed “all the families of the earth should be blessed?” Some of those waking dreamers who imagine themselves “special favourites of heaven,” entertain strange notions of poor Esau, as if he was an instance of the most perfect abandonment, though we see him with his brother Jacob, at his father Isaac’s funeral, in the enjoyment of the richest of earthly blessings, in no wise inferior to his brother Jacob, and standing on the same footing with him, in regard of human redemption; for, surely, if all the families of the earth were to be blessed in Abraham, his near relations would not be excluded, neither would they be included in the promise, because they were related in the flesh. In order to be *personally* interested, we must be *believers personally*, and thereby become the spiritual children of Abraham, “For they only who believe are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

I have done with the individual, the recollection of whom has elicited the above remarks; being persuaded that his method was not calculated to multiply the number of believers.

I shall now introduce a character more in accordance with my own views of the simplicity of the Gospel, which adapts itself to intellects that can scarcely be made to perceive that two and

two make four; such know nothing of those refinements which large dreamy brains make their pens produce, which frequently tend to make darkness more palpably dark, and which would crack their own brains to understand, and quite bewilder, rather than enlighten their readers; especially such readers as those to whom the Gospel is sent in general.—The one I shall introduce was a poor old man, lame of one leg, who used to come, with an up-and-a-down, all the way from Waddington, where he resided. I knew him once, in very cold weather, to have got to Lincoln as early as seven o'clock in the morning, which was the time the prayer-meeting was held on a Sabbath morning.—I remarked to him upon being with us so early on so cold a morning; he replied, in language which was very familiar to him, “Bless the Lord,” he said, “it’s colder in hell.” “Colder in hell, Charley! how can you make that appear?” He said, “There’s none of the love of God to warm us there.” Charley was very illiterate, and his outward appearance not very prepossessing, especially to those who could not perceive that a diamond was enveloped there in a covering of so little promise; even my parents had to learn how I could take so much interest in an old man of so shabby appearance, thinking me to have a poor choice of companions. But my parents could not see Charley as I saw him; I saw that he had got what was hid from their eyes, “The pearl of great price.” Yes, Charley loved the Saviour, and the Saviour loved him; and I too loved him because he loved the Saviour.—I could indulge in many pleasing imaginations in connection with Charley; his appearance, his simplicity, his hearty cheerfulness, all conspired to make him an object of interest to the simple-hearted. Yes! simplicity was the order of the day at that time, and little else was cared for.—The preachers and their hearers were similar in that respect in those days. The preacher, then, if he took a poor man by the hand, would not be looking over his head to speak to one more respectable. I remember its being remarked of Charley, that he had some respect for the good things by which his poor old body got cheered, as well as that spiritual food he had always access to, and who, I would ask, would not rejoice to have it in his power to give the poor old creature a mouthful of food to gladden his already glad heart? and, considering his laborious walk of five miles, with a lame leg. It may be asked, why take so much

interest in Charley—he was not a Lincoln Methodist? No, but as several young persons were in the habit of going to Waddington to hold prayer-meetings, they claimed Charley as the fruit of their labours; and he was, in consequence, always welcome at Lincoln.—So much for Charley.

“Well, friend! I have been thinking of your request, and I must say I feel not a little puzzled with it?” “What was my request, friend? “Why, that I would send customers to your shop.” Well, I thought and thought, and the more I tried to pin my thoughts down to that subject, the more they would fly off, and I could not for my life hold the fugitives.—I found, when I did think upon the matter, that the request was of such a nature, that I could not urge it for myself without, in some sort injuring my neighbour whom I am bound to love as myself. Perhaps you will say, are we not bound to take care of ourselves, and do the best we can for our families? Here, you perceive, we inadvertently fall in with a general principle—let *we*, then, stand for myself, my neighbour, and everyone else; this will shut the door of selfishness, and lead to a general conclusion that God is as much concerned for my neighbour as myself, and the object of our desires will have a pleasing issue, or, at least, appear more in accordance with the charity we profess toward all men, if we pray God to send prosperity to the community, in which we may hope to have a share. But you will perhaps try to remind me that John Wesley himself approved of the usage, and enjoins it upon his Societies; well, if you will have it (I mean exclusive dealing,) let it be done thoroughly, and refuse to serve all who would be your customers, if they do not belong to your fraternity. We cannot receive everything that comes from Wesley, right as he was in most things.

One of the old local preachers, in connection with whom I have some rather amusing recollections, lived at Navenby; his name was Blackburn. This man probably was one of those Mr. Hett had in view, when he says the preachers in connection with Methodism were low mechanics, hedge doctors, &c.,* for he was a hedger and ditcher. I remember with what glee this warm-hearted individual came to Lincoln to get his license to preach. If he had been going to receive a large fortune he could not have shown more joyful animation. Our friend's tongue was ever on the move; he was a regular chatterer, and

* See page 45.

though he understood few words well, he aimed at a great many which he often mistook. He would hear a sermon preached, and take it home with him, making most of its matter and manner his own, and deliver it second-hand at one of his appointments ; I remember his being found fault with for this. I heard him preach once in a house at Waddington from Genesis vii. 4. “For yet seven days, and I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty days and forty nights ; and every living substance that I have made will I destroy from off the face of the earth.” He attempted an exposition of some of the words he had read, and had become so learned as to talk about translating. I believe that which he said, he had got from what he had heard some one else say. In making observations on some of the words which he had read, he said, “some *translate* the words” so and so, “others in this manner, but *I translate them*” so and so. Who could fail to feel amused, or be able not to smile at hearing such blissful ignorance as this ? His inventive genius led him to find what no man ever found before or since, even a Christian Sabbath in the old world. Speaking of the phrase “yet seven days,” he, “and so there was another Christian Sabbath granted them to get salvation in.” He, in his preaching, made almost every word emphatical, throwing his head from side to side, to mark the emphasis. If he got the devil into his hands, he did bang him about in grand style, very much after the manner that Punch is seen to bang about his wife Judy. After his sermon, I asked him if he had been to College, as he had become so marvellously wise as to be able to put Hebrew and Greek into English ? Poor George ! he knew not the meaning of translating. Our hearty old friend, notwithstanding he was so illiterate, was a great favourite with the people ; his zeal and fondness of the work on which he was engaged, tended to place him in a state of constant readiness for action. No subject was too difficult for George, he would pick up something that would be suitable to his different texts, and other things of common import he never failed to mention in all his sermons. George being very pious and very zealous, was much beloved. If he were appointed to preach, the people had no fear of being disappointed. At the time he was admitted on the preacher’s plan, the local preachers were few in number, not more perhaps than nine or ten ; their plans were in manuscript, as were the class-leader’s papers.

The circuit was then large, including Sleaford, Tavvats, and several distant places not now included; their walks then were long and laborious, requiring such spirits and constitutions as Blackburn's.

I see Mr. Watmough makes our Sunday School to commence in 1806, which will be found to be rather out of time; I know this from two or three circumstances, one of which I find in his own book: he mentions Mr. John Bedford as going out as an itinerant preacher in 1805; now I know that Mr. Bedford was a very regular attendant at the School a long time before he left us to itinerate. I know the date to be wrong from other circumstances, relating to myself; when I entered the School, I was put into the easy reading class, where, I doubt not, I should be kept a good while, as I recollect I was a long time stumbling through a sentence,—I cannot say how long it was after this ere I was put to the writing desk, but I do remember seeing William Hickingbotham, after his name, at the bottom of his book, writing 1804. A good while after this, I remember to have been made an assistant at the writing desk, and to have seen Mr. Bedford with the other teachers, making and mending pens, setting copies, &c. It seems, from what I recollect, that the commencement of the School might be dated as early as 1802 or 1803.

The institution of Sunday Schools, perhaps of all projects, has given the least offence of all others, except to those who are cursed with the jaundiced eye of prejudice. The success which has attended this happy movement has closed every mouth that might be opened against it. Yet, good as this object was, and general as was the satisfaction expressed by the populace, it did not fail to stir up prejudices and jealousies in some quarters. Some could see nothing in these movements made by Methodists and dissenters, but a monstrous increase of sectarianism calculated to flood away Mother Church, upset the government, the throne, and everything so dear to Englishmen, and introduce nothing but anarchy and insubordination. These phantoms of disordered imaginations led to results which (though intended to be a check to our Sunday School operations) have proved a great blessing to this nation; I refer to the establishment of what were improperly called National Schools, from which, bye-the-bye, the children of Methodists and dissenters

were excluded, or, perhaps, it would be more proper to say, the children of such were not allowed to be instructed, as though they were no part of the nation. An idiot might see the lurking venom in so exclusive a measure as this. We see that even envy itself, in the hands of a superior power, may be overruled to the production of incalculable benefits to society in general. These false alarms about the increase of sects have been the means of thousands of individuals being well instructed, who, perhaps, but for those alarms, might yet have remained in ignorance. We perceive, in instances like these, that the worst of motives may sometimes produce the most happy results. For my own part, I have great reason to be thankful that Sunday Schools were ever set on foot in Lincoln; I was introduced in consequence to a people whose piety and kindness astonished and delighted me more than anything with which I had had any previous acquaintance. Everything seemed so inviting, so pleasing, so new, so altogether different to what I had been used to, that it operated as a charm; I was as it were spell-bound; so much so, that I never once absented myself from the School, for any cause whatever. It was then, as now, the custom to open the School with singing and prayer, and to conclude (after a short exhortation, given by one of the teachers or visitors) in the same pleasing order.—I remember to this day something of the style and manner of some of the addresses given to us. They spoke to us as if they saw before their eyes the things they seemed so anxious to impress us with. I cannot forget those truly Christian people, though many of them have long since quitted this present scene of things.

Another thought or two, in reference to Sunday Schools seem to suggest themselves; a great good, a good even as great as that we have been speaking of, may be possessed, and yet, in the use of it, we may fail to produce, in connection with it, every thing as good and profitable as itself, or as might be wished should spring from it. This may be said of Sunday Schools, whose government is carried on independently of any control of the Church, to which it is supposed to belong. Thus, classes of young persons have been formed of such as have been supposed to have been enlightened in religious matters, and have been admitted to privileges nearly equal to those of Church members themselves. Those scions are petted as if they had arrived at a

state of stability equal to that of "pillars in the church," and are invited to prate and pray in large meetings, and are looked upon by the warm-hearted as prodigies ; but these prodigies, like mock suns, soon disappear, though, perhaps, by a more judicious supervision, they might be retained and rendered useful members of Society. There are, however, individuals amongst us who seem to set a greater value on their emotions than on their understandings, and conclude too soon, that because they feel well upon a matter that it must be right, and those who, more cool than they, refuse to jump into their fire, and blaze away with them, are by them esteemed as cold as icicles, and not fit for the assembly of saints. Let it not be wondered at that I cannot be easily carried away by floods of mere animalism, when I state that I have seen many such floods, and have observed them to leave little else than mud behind. Whole batches of impulsive individuals I have known to come to worse than nothing. Let me not be misunderstood here. I do not intend to insinuate that it is wrong in believers to be hearty and warm in the holy cause of religion ; far from it, for if there is a thing on earth which ought to engage a man's entire affections, it is religion. Nothing but God should have a man's whole heart ! neither can a man give his whole heart to any object beside, without being an idolator : hence the admonition, " Little children keep yourselves from idols." O yes ! a warm heart is a good thing, when tempered with a cool head ; a head that will try the impulses of the heart and passions, which must be kept in subjection to the higher powers, the understanding and the teaching of the Holy Scriptures. It is no hard matter to perceive how easy it is for impulsive persons, who are in the habit of exhorting or preaching, to be carried away with notions which will not stand the scrutiny of the Written Word. I noticed an itinerant lately, of a sanguine temperament, who was very much excited in the pulpit, and seemed to have so much self-satisfaction, that he could not forbear clapping himself off, and sounding his own trumpet. He said many things, but which, by-the-bye, were nearly as objectionable as they were numerous. This brother, whose zeal outstripped his wisdom, after descending the pulpit, got the prayer leaders together, inviting penitents to come forward, that they might be prayed into salvation. Telling the prayer leaders that he believed, that if they struggled for it, all the penitents before

them would be saved there and then. I want to learn whence the authority for such rant is derived; I am sure Paul never believed a word of it. If he knew that his prayers, offered for another, would be effectual, irrespective of the man's own faith, would he not gladly have become the instrument of the salvation of his own brethren according to the flesh, for whom he had "continual sorrow in his heart?" and for "whose sake he could even wish himself accursed from Christ" if that would help them. Did Paul treat the jailor at Phillipi as our people (some of them) treat penitents? When the jailor enquired of Paul, "What he should do to be saved?" did he bid him kneel down that he might *pray him into salvation*? Not a bit of it, Paul knew better! but our friends (some of them) affect to be wiser than Paul, and "don't care what Paul nor anybody else says." "I feel well, and will make as much noise as ever I can." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," was Paul's reply. Why should any one attempt to reverse his order and practice, and institute unscriptural methods, or vagaries of their own? Paul was sent to "open the eyes of the people," to "turn them from darkness to light," "from the power of Satan unto God;" to point men to the cross, to tell them why it was lifted up, how men are interested in it, and then he said to every one thus enlightened, "Believe on him who died on that cross for thee, and thou *shalt be saved*." It is argued that some get good at ranting meetings. None, except those who have been previously enlightened to see how the Saviour "Bore their griefs and carried their sorrows;" how He put himself in their stead, was born, lived, suffered and died, all for them who believe it. Not that they may continue in sin, but that they may be saved from it, and receive grace to live a life of holiness. So it is one of this sort would get saved, if the hurricane of rant and noise of ungoverned passions were equal to those at a Spanish bull-fight.

I find recollections of things and persons rush upon me, which, perhaps, might as well be forgotten; but a man forgets nothing that he has once distinctly known. I cannot prevent the ghosts of departed years rising up and staring me in the face. There they are, and there they will be, despite my efforts to elude them or drive them away. My poor old brains, not being in the habit of thinking in order

to put thoughts on paper, led me such a game last night that I could not get a wink of sleep for hours. I felt as if I were accompanying Satan in his excursion through chaos. What a confusion of lumber presented itself. Things obsolete, and men long since dead, presented themselves, so I made up my mind to nail a few of them, in order to ease myself in somewise of any future obtrusion from them. I was troubled, as I suppose most men are at times, with things which transpired when I was a lad ; thoughts of the ignorance and wickedness which I knew to exist, particularly arrested my attention, causing me to wonder what the eighteen or twenty thousand clergymen had been about for ages, who had spent money enough, if it had been in right hands, to have converted the world to true Christianity long ago. At the time in question, almost every one called himself a member of the Church of England, but if a word were mentioned to them about their souls, they would instantly exclaim, "Oh, we make no profession of religion ;" and so dark were they upon the subject, that when they heard persons who had got a true concern for their souls, pray, they either thought they were going off their heads, or had been committing murder, or had been guilty of some crime as frightful.

One man whom I well knew, said, "The Methodists and their preachers were calculated to drive people out of their senses," saying, "They condemn themselves and everybody else." This bewildered man used to make sport at the expense of persons suffering from any cause whatever,—the deformed, lame, deaf or blind. He once gave a neighbour's dog a cork buttered, of which the poor creature died in the greatest agonies, whilst he was laughing at the cruel tortures he had inflicted on the poor innocent animal, its master not knowing what ailed it. The wretch appeared to enjoy this vicious sport. Some years after this man went stone blind. Then he thought if he bought a couple of basses, and he and his wife had prayer in his house, he might get his eyesight again. They tried his plan for awhile, but finding no relief, he said to his wife, "Anne Janey, I think, Anne, it is no use us praying any more, my eyes are no better, and so I think we'll throw the basses away."

Another man of the same period, who must have possessed a very strong resolution, or nerve, or something else, I

knew to have carried out the strange resolution of chopping off, with an axe, the fingers of one of his hands, to get discharged from being a soldier. I fell into discourse with this man about the state of his soul. I tried to explain to him the nature of the new birth. After a good deal of talk on the subject, the old man made his own inference from all he had heard, winding up with this remark, "Hey," he said, "we often hear it remarked, *once a man and twice a child.*"

I will only mention another out of the hundreds I might produce. This shall be Old Kit, a bird fancier, the worst of rips I have any knowledge of. He was an old freeman of the city; I heard him say the very night on wh'ich the two elected members of Parliament had been chaired, s' Now, I wish they were both as dead as a stone." Thig wish was expressed for no other reason than that he miicht, in consequence of their death, have as good a chance of getng, at the election that must in consequence ensue, as much money as he had got at the election which had just ended. This old man was one day gathering seeds for his bird, when Colonel Sibthorp's butler was passing, who, observing him, said, "What are you getting there, Kit." "Colonel Sibthorp's posy, sir!" "Colonel Sibthorp's posy! what do you mean?" "Why, isn't it what they call pick-pockets?" "Hey! its pick-pocket!" "I don't understand you." "Oh! don't you? were you ever at a dancing?" "O yes, what of that?" "Did you not pay the fiddler?" "Of course I did." "I thought so." The Colonel, it seems, had not at that time squared with the freemen to their satisfaction. Though this old man's language and manners were so terribly repulsive and infidel in the years of his health, so much so, that scarcely any one durst say a word to him in the form of reproof, he was accessible in his declining days, and individuals were allowed to talk and read to him, and pray with him. I introduce these specimens of darkness, to show the quality of the raw materials, left in the hands of Methodists and dissenters, by Mother Church, to work upon.

It is puzzling to learn what could possibly be the real cause of the jealousies and alarms of the Church, in its then state of darkness, at the movements of Methodists and dissenters,—could it be that it feared the piety of its members should be destroyed? or that its spirituality should suffer by the carnal inroads of

heretics and schismatics,—was it not a fear that the fleece might be snatched away from idle shepherds, who provided no grass or water for the sheep !

About the year 1811, the Rev. W. Hett, prebendary of the Lincoln Cathedral, became suddenly inspired with a deep concern for the future welfare of Methodism, putting himself about to institute for us a state of things which must have rendered us, if successful, far more powerful and respectable. He regrets to find that we were getting seriously wrong, and that if nothing intervened to prevent, we must speedily come to ruin. He became very anxious that all our preachers should be eminently educated, and that no immoral character should be allowed to be amongst us to disgrace us, and that if any should be found with us, whose conduct would not bear the strictest investigation, should be punished. And he would have us so refined, and rendered so much like gentlemen, that whenever we saw any of the regular clergy near us, we were to show them such reverence and homage as if they had nothing but reverence and homage to live upon. And all this, too, if even met with drunk, or following a pack of hounds. The dissenters were not to be allowed to say a word against the clergy, their preaching, or conduct in the world. But the clergy might scold, brawl, and lie from their pulpit till they cracked their lungs, and though they should charge the dissenters with as many foul things, and call them as many ugly names, as the Rev. W. Hett has done himself, and yet be blameless. This rev. gentleman must have thought the dissenters a set of poor brainless things, not able to infer, when they saw a cob-web, that there had been a spider there. The Rev. W. Hett became inflated with these inspirations at the time Lord Sydmouth's bill was about to be presented to Parliament—a bill which, if it had passed, would have swept away every vestige of religious liberty. But God, in whom we trust, when the bill went into the house, went in with it, and with one puff of His disapprobation, blew it into everlasting oblivion. Our friend Hett thought this a proper time to bestir himself; perhaps he thought of the old hackneyed phrase, “strike whilst the iron's hot.” So immediately under the influence of a warm heart and hot head, he resolves to write, and send letters to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in which letters, he lays many grievous accusations against the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists. In the

first place, he represents the doctrines of Methodism to be of so frightful a character as to be calculated to send people mad. He might have picked up this from a circumstances which occurred in our chapel, which I have adverted to somewhere in the course of these ramblings. It relates to a crazy woman who got into our chapel a time or two, and was a great annoyance to us. We were not inclined to kick her out, as we might have kicked out a dog, but were glad to get rid of her as well as we could. Our kindly sympathetic friend seemed delighted to catch hold of anything, however fragile, if he could thereby hold us up to ridicule, if it were but for a moment, and would be as much pleased with it as an idiot would with a mouse he had got swinging by the tail. I know the tale about the mad woman got spread abroad. In the next place he complains to his lordship of the *illiterate*, employed by us as teachers or preachers. And here he presents a variety equal to what might be found in a basket of toadstools, which must have had as deleterious an effect upon the minds and and morals of society, as toadstools would, if eaten, have upon the human system. Hear him:—"The teachers of Methodism are mean and illiterate, silly boys, idle, ignorant, profligate mechanics, or day labourers, without any religious information or any real attachment to anything that is good." Do not allow yourselves to be tempted to say, "Thou liest, old friend!" Our beloved Christianity will not suffer us to shut out all the palliating circumstances which might be urged in his favour, but it invites us to hope, that, however bad his object might appear to be, he might nevertheless, though blindly, mean well. This poor misguided man, though he knew so little about Methodists and other dissenters, thought he knew them so perfectly well, that without any hesitancy he comes to the conclusion, that, however various their views and doctrines might be, they were all agreed, without one exception, in one grand purpose, which was to *upset the Church and State*. I remember the Rev. W. Hett, in one of his rhapsodies, calls one of our preachers a hedge-doctor. Mr. Wm. Mawer, who replied to the letters sent to the Archbishop, corrects this learned phrase, as being applied to a hedger and ditcher, putting into his mouth these more appropriate words— "*hedge carpenter.*" Well, our solicitous and very anxious friend is resolved that we should not be plagued with such ignorant, idle, profligate wretches for teachers much longer; for the restric-

tions he would have imposed would render such a state of things utterly impossible. He suggested that, before any young man should have a licence granted to preach the gospel, sufficient notice of his intention to apply for one should be sent to the chairman of the quarter sessions. A certificate of his age, the title upon which he is to be admitted a preacher, proof examination, and approbation; and also, letters testimonials of his good life and behaviour for three years antecedent to his offering himself a candidate, signed by three well-known and respectable inhabitants of the parish in which he has resided, should be produced, and, after all, it was to rest, of course, with the magistrates, whether he should be allowed to preach or not. Another thing which he wished the Parliament to do, was to pass a law to this effect, that if any dissenter, whether a minister or one of the people, shall hereafter knowingly and wilfully, either directly or indirectly, by writing or word of mouth, or in any way whatever, say or do anything which shall bring into disrepute, or endanger the constitution; or shall by the same means disparage or lower the character of the regular clergy, so as to lessen them in the estimation of the people, he, she, or they, shall, on conviction of such offence, be liable to certain punishment. Now, if candidates for holy orders, in his day, were subjected to such a sifting as this, which he would have instituted for the ministers of dissenters and Methodists, what would have become of them? Duplicity is as palpably apparent in this movement of the old gentleman, as his want of wit. The more we try to reduce the vagaries of the Rev. W. Hett to a common sense view, the more we find it impossible to do so. He was terrified at a system of things, which, by his own confession, must be utterly powerless, its elements being of such a quality as to render it perfectly inefficient. He is concerned, in the first place, for our *ignorance*, which we know implies the absence of knowing or knowledge, from the absence of which is other's power inferred, for the great Bacon says, "knowledge is power." Then, again, there is our *idleness*, which would render knowledge, if we had it, of no use, as it would leave our knowledge to rust and rot. And, again, being a lot of unfortunate bipeds doomed to labour and sweat, to earn their potatoes and bit of bacon, and to pay for their bit of shelter; they must, of course, be *profligate*, without any real attachment to that which is good. These are the elements of

which the cloud of his terrified imagination is composed, and yet, though composed of such weak materials, somehow or other the conglomeration of united weaknesses was to sweep away the massive pile of wood and stone in which he worshipped with so much self-complacency and pomp.

Well, after all, the old gent. affects to have a great reverence for the holy scriptures, though they condemn him for his “backbiting, lying, and slandering.” How plainly it appears that the intention of his reverence was, not to render us more respectable; not to mend us, *but end us.*

I have a sermon preached by one of our idle, ignorant silly pates, in 1800, printed by Mr. Brooke, of Lincoln. This sermon was preached September 28th, 1800, by Samuel Gates, one of our ministers, and was as good a sermon as I could wish to hear even at the present time. It was preached on the occasion of the death of a Mr. Hannah, mentioned in these sheets.

About the time of the writing of the letters referred to in the previous pages, we had some excellent men amongst us as ministers, men of eminent piety and untiring zeal. The labours they had to perform were arduous in the extreme. The miles they had to walk, the sermons they had to preach, the privations and hardships they had to submit to, formed, in the aggregate, a mass of laborious effort, from which every fastidious and chicken-hearted individual would shrink. We cannot think of those self-denying and holy men without loving them; their memory is indeed blessed. They deserved the people’s affections, and they had them.

Mr. Benjamin Seckerson particularly recurs to my recollection, a man of rare piety and devotedness to God’s cause and people. He always seemed to preach as “a dying man to dying men.” In all his sermons, light serenely shone, commanding homage from the feeling heart. He looked on earthly things as fleeting, and urged his hearers to fix their hearts on things above.

“ The world he saw diminish’d to a point,
Her fame a bubble, and her riches dross,
And all her happiness a broken reed.
Heaven shone, with radiant beams, full on his soul,
Dispelling thence all sublunary things.”

It is impossible to say too much in praise of such a man as he. His example also, as a plain man, was safe to follow. He was a

widower when at Lincoln, and had a daughter, whom he sent to our Sunday School ; she was observed to be dressed the plainest of any girl in the School.

And then there was a Mr. William Draper, another of our ministers, a man of rare eloquence, from whom language poured as from an ever-flowing fountain, a gift the which many great men might wish in vain to acquire by any means, or purchase at any price. This man was manifestly fitted to defend the out-works of Christianity,—evidently “set for the defence of the gospel.” Many others might be mentioned who rendered excellent service to the good cause they had espoused.

Then again, we had had frequent opportunities of hearing a Mr. Dixon, of Bassingham, a gentleman of considerable general information, preach. This man had been nine years in search of the true and heart-renewing doctrines of the gospel, which speaks very badly for the teaching and teachers of Mother Church in those days. This person, after he got converted to God, spent all his time, talents, and nearly all his money, in forwarding the cause he had so warmly espoused, and which he so ardently loved ; doing great service in all the country places to which he had access ; and who, that has any recollection of the moral condition of many of our surrounding villages, before the introduction of Methodism, will be so ungenerous as not to acknowledge the benefits that have accrued to the inhabitants by the light thrown among them by Methodist preaching, together with the aid of Sunday Schools ?

Sixty years ago it was almost impossible for a stranger to go through a country town without his being insulted. Children of all ages, from four to fourscore years, would assemble in groups in different parts of the town, that they might laugh at the coarse wit some urchin of the party would frame to cast on passengers, such as—“Look at his bandy legs,” “Did you see his nose ?” “How he gizzens,” “He stares like a stuck rat,” —and then would follow a glorious burst of laughter, as if they had got the wit of a Garrick amongst them. All must be aware that much of such rudeness has disappeared. Nay, many such as those who used to form those disgusting groups, are now refined and decent in their manners, so that strangers may now pass along without molestation.

I have no intention to leave unnoticed the zeal and piety of

several of the wives of the preachers at the time referred to—how warmly they interested themselves in the cause of God; how they laboured to build up believers in the faith; and what special interest they took in the young and uninformed. Those excellent females were not ashamed to own religion, though it walked not in silver slippers and worldly gaud. They would not slip on one side to shun a member of the Church, whom they were likely to meet in their dirty working dress. They thought it not beneath them to stand to talk with anyone, anywhere, under any circumstances. In all matters connected with religion they were helpers together, with their husbands, thus becoming lighteners of their burdens. Their “price was above rubies.”

I find I cannot make mountains out of mole hills, and may, perhaps, subject myself to ridicule on the account of introducing trifles, which it would be better to dispense with. But then, again, I am reminded of this great fact, that trifles, with the occasional addition of a thing of more striking import, make up the sum of a mortal’s history; so that, if trifles were sifted therefrom, little would remain.

I shall, therefore, just attempt to ease my memory of a few trifles which connect themselves with three preachers who were labouring with us, taking their regular weekly appointments. No three individuals could be more dissimilar in many respects than they were. There was no danger of mistaking one for the other, though we might not see them, only having their voices for our guide. Their names were W. Butler, John Jackson (many years afterwards President of the Conference), and Francis Rigley. I have often heard the following coarse gingling lines repeated in connection with those men, for what reason I can’t say:—

“ Butler for learning, Jackson for wit,
Old Rigley’s for all the money he can get.”

Butler’s manner of preaching was solemn and deliberate, Rigley was impulsive, and had a very harsh unpleasant voice, whilst Jackson’s was all music, which, with his delightfully flowing eloquence, rendered him a most charming preacher.

I remember a rather amusing incident in connection with Mr. Rigley’s preaching. He was preaching from a text out of the Book of Job; I don’t remember the words, but I recollect he referred to the book itself as being a real history, and not an

allegory, as some writers ventured to assume. He said, "Those persons who affirmed that Job was a merely imaginary being, and that the Book of Job was not a real, but a parabolical thing or a mere allegory, were mistaken;" for the book says, "there was a man in the land of UZ, whose NAME was Joo—b;" and his emphasising was such as to lead his hearers to suppose that he thought that nothing could be more conclusive than what he had advanced in favour of its being a *real history*.

I have a rather amusing incident to relate which transpired just before some other matters I intend to lighten my memory of. This will relate to a Member of our Society, named Asthrope, who was converted to God in his old age, which circumstance appeared to bring back to him the ardour and buoyancy of youth. Late he received his first Christian love; but he retained it to the end. With what joyfulness would he express his sense of God's goodness in calling him at the "eleventh hour to work in His vineyard," as he expressed himself, and rewarding him with wages, equal to those who had "borne the labour and heat of the day." He was always ready to express his sense of God's love to him, was generally the first to speak at lovefeasts and other speaking meetings; he would say, "I am like a vessel filled with new wine; I cannot forbear to speak, I must speak; if I don't the very stones will cry out against me. I was wandering in the downward road till the eleventh hour, like a lost sheep, and He has brought me into His fold, and shan't I praise Him? Yes! bless the Lord! I can praise Him, and I will praise Him!"

One Sabbath afternoon, when a lovefeast was about to be held, a rather officious man stopped him, as he was going up the stairs into the gallery, and said to him, "Now, friend Asthrope, don't you be so forward, let some one else speak first to day; don't be so very officious." He made no reply to this; but as soon as the meeting (as usual) was opened by singing and prayer, the bread and water distributed, and the collection made for the poor, and the minister had made a few remarks, up he bolts as on other occasions, saying, "I am here once more to speak of the goodness of God. The *devil* met me as I was going up the stairs into the gallery, told me to hold my tongue awhile, and not be in such a hurry to speak. But who has a greater cause to praise God than I have? He found me in the downward road in my sins and in my blood, and at the 'eleventh hour brought

me up out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay, and has set my feet upon a rock ;' and shan't I praise Him ? Shall I hide the work of His Spirit from my brethren and sisters, and shut up His righteousness in my heart ? Shall I be ashamed to confess Him before men ? No ! if I am ashamed to confess Him and His work, will He not be ashamed of me, and turn His back on me ? May He help me to hold on and hold out to the end, that I may receive the crown of life which the Lord, the righteous Judge, has promised to give me in that day !"

I quite forgot when I was upon the subject of Sunday Schools, to make any remarks relative to singing. It will be in vain for any one to expect anything from me that might be called regular or systematic, as I only just snatch up a thing as it recurs to my recollection, except that, in matters which have taken place, I try to introduce them as nearly the time of their occurrence as my memory will suggest.

Of late years musicians have, apparently, taken a pleasing interest in that pleasurable department of school exercise, singing, and have succeeded in introducing a species of music, simple, and because simple, very appropriate for children. Many of these compositions have been snatched away, by musicians, from light ditties of a bygone age, and put into the form we see, with originalities of their own. Nothing can be more effective and pleasing than this kind of music in the mouths of children. The contrivance of adapting one note to one syllable is excellent. Mr. Wesley himself, being an excellent musician, would occasionally compose words, which he would adapt to a song tune.

I remember hearing an old soldier relating a circumstance in connection with Wesley, which he appeared to have a perfect knowledge of. He told me that John Wesley was once preaching in a place to a rather turbulent and uncultivated congregation, who, when the time for singing arrived, instead of singing the hymn he gave out, sang one of their own obscene and filthy ditties ; Wesley wrote down the notes of the tune whilst they were singing it. He told them, at the conclusion of the service, that the next night, if they would come to the meeting, they should sing his words if they would to their own tune. The man recited the words to me, which Wesley composed for them to sing, which my memory has retained to this day, though it is more than fifty years since I first heard them.

OCCASIONAL HYMN.

“ Listed into the cause of sin,
 Why should a good be evil ?
 Music, alas ! too oft hath been
 Press'd to obey the devil.
 Drunken and lewd, and light the lay,
 Sung to the soul's undoing ;
 Widen'd and strew'd with flowers the way
 Down to eternal ruin !

Come, let us see if Jesus' love,
 Will not as well inspire us ?
 This is the theme of those above ;
 This upon earth should fire us !
 Save your hearts, a theme to sing,
 Have you a subject greater ?
 Harmony all its charms bring,
 Jesus' love is sweeter !”

It is easy to perceive that the music set to the above is now in use in our schools. It would require but one note to each syllable.

The singing now in use in our schools is such, perhaps, as the Quakers would not much object to. They find fault with so much quavering over a word or syllable. They say, how ridiculous it would be to go to a neighbour and say, “ Neighbour, w-i-i-i-lt thou lend m-e-e-e-e thy wheelbarrow.”

I will now mention one who often amused us with his eccentricities. He was a local preacher ; I heard him preach once, at the time of the sitting of the Conference, our preachers having gone thither. At that time the singing pew was just under the pulpit. Preaching was in the afternoon and at night. He preached in the afternoon. When he had got into the pulpit, he, stretching his neck forward and looking down into the singing pew, said, “ Now, friends, let us have none of your ho, ho, ho tunes !” The choir had been newly-formed, and I expect some of the tunes brought out were not congenial with his old prejudices. I remember some of his sayings in his discourse, though I do not retain the order of his sermon, if it might be called one. In speaking of the crucifixion, he said, “ We'm don't blame the Jews, we'm as bad as they was ; our sins nailed Him to the tree, pointed tha *nail*, and fixed tha *thorne*.” This old gentleman prided himself very much as having been once a leader of some

country church choir ; his style of singing was very ludicrous, none could hear him sing and retain gravity, his twang was so nasal ; he indeed sent every note through his nose with so strange a jingle as could not fail to incline one rather to laugh than to weep. I once heard him preach from the words, "And salt without prescribing how much." But I never heard the word "*prescribing*" after he read it. Ever after it was "*ascribing*" how much. He went on to describe the properties of salt, and the effect it had upon certain substances.

Methodism in Lincoln has derived its influence, in some instances, from various seemingly trivial sources, which, like tributary streams, help to swell the current of the ever-rolling river. From a solitary visit to a sick person, results of a lasting and really beneficial character ensued. The brother of the sick man was in the room when the visitor spoke to and prayed with the sick, who received little or no good. But his brother was converted on the spot, and immediately opened his house, which was situated in St. Botolph's parish, for preaching and prayer ; this man became himself a local preacher, remaining to his death a steady and consistent Member of the Methodist Society ; a son also of his became a regular preacher of the Gospel. I have heard several of the Rev. Daniel Isaac's sermons in that house. Who shall despise the day of small and feeble things ? No man can conjecture what amount of good will finally arise from that single visit to the sick man's chamber.

In 1815 we have demonstrative evidence of the increase and prosperity of Methodism in Lincoln, in the erection of a new chapel on the site now occupied by the Savings' Bank. In the time intervening between the building of this and the first chapel, the numbers of Members in Society had more than trebled ; so 'tis no wonder to hear them reiterating the cry of the sons of the prophets of yore.—"The place where we dwell is too strait for us." There was no standing still in Methodism in those days, whatever may be its fate in future. The most eloquent Richard Watson, being appointed to open this chapel, afforded those who heard him, a treat, which, for richness, cannot be exceeded, and which will scarcely ever be equalled.

" Soft as the fleeces of descending snows,
The copious accents fall with easy art :
Melting they fall, and sink into the heart."

Perhaps some of his words might be above the reach of those who scarcely know one word from another. I remember, in speaking of the love of Christ, he made use of the phrase—"Exuberant love!" But he made his words fit so well, that it was almost impossible to mistake their meaning. The opening of this chapel afforded matter of great rejoicing to those feeling interested in the welfare of their fellow-men, and who, with heart and voice, could join in the joyful song of the angels who sung redemption's story,—“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.”

Many who have not received the gift of grace in their hearts, wonder how it is that men should take such an interest in building chapels and churches, employing their money and energies in matters so unlikely to yield them any pecuniary remuneration. It is the great principle of love, put into the hearts of believers by the Holy Spirit; the love which moved the Gracious Author of man's redemption, to lay aside the glory he had with the Father from eternity, and to assume human flesh, to live in this world, not for Himself, and to die, not for Himself, but for all the human race, which, by transgression, had effected their own ruin, “that whosoever believeth in Him” might be restored to His image, and have everlasting life. Again, it is because (as Methodists especially), we believe that the good news announced by the angels at the Saviour's birth was intended for every man, of all people.

There is a religious view taken by certain parties, which, I trust, we Methodists will never consent to take. If we took such a view as that I shall refer to, we would not build a chapel at all. This is the view taken by the parties in question,—That Christ will save all for whom He died. This, you know, is what the Calvinists say. Well, then, just let us make St. John a Calvinist for a minute or two, and we shall see what that will result in. John says, “He died for, or was the propitiation for the whole world,” so that, according to Calvin's teaching, “all the *world must* be saved.” Thus 'tis impossible not to come to the conclusion which favours the notion of universal redemption. How easy it is to see that conditions cannot be dispensed with. “Whosoever will let him take: whosoever believeth shall be or shall have.”

At the second Conference, after the opening of our chapel, in

what is now called Bank-street, the Rev. Daniel Isaac was appointed to labour in the Lincoln circuit. The first time I saw him, after his leaving Lincoln, in 1802, to be a regular preacher, was at the Monday night prayer meeting, 1816. I remember the words he gave out to be sung, as well as if they were now sounding in my ears ; the tune I[®] did know, but it has left me for the present. These were the words :—

“ What is our calling’s glorious hope,
But inward holiness ?

For this to Jesus we look up,
We calmly wait for this !

We wait till He shall touch us clean,
Shall life and power impart ?

Give us the faith which casts out sin,
And purifies the heart !

This is the dear redeeming grace,
For every sinner free ;
Surely it shall in me take place,
The chief of sinners, me !”

Daniel Isaac was a man far surpassing men in general in strength of intellect ; so much so, that those coming in contact with him, felt themselves to be but children, except those whose ignorance prevented them from understanding their own, or other’s abilities.

This tremendous scourge of vice was a terror to the wicked ; of course they did not love him much. His sarcasms upon the fine names they invented to cover foul and filthy vices, made them fit to eat their finger ends. But though he would often cut some of his audience to vexation, they could not refrain themselves from coming to hear his all-commanding and masculine eloquence ; though he vexed some, they could not resist the mighty magnetism his signal genius created. I will not say of him, as was said of Garrick,—

“ He casts off his friends
As a huntsman his pack ;
For he knew, when he pleased,
He could whistle them back.”

At the time Mr. Isaac was in the Lincoln circuit, he was invited to Sleaford to preach two occasional sermons for some cause which required the making of collections : he had heard that several infidels were coming to hear him. Before he com-

menced his sermon he addressed the infidels, warning them of the subject he intended to introduce, telling them that if they did not wish to be annoyed they had better withdraw. Again when the collection was about to be made, he said, "we don't want a penny from any of you infidels; we don't wish you to lend your aid in support of a faith you oppose and profess to disbelieve; we can do very well without such help as your's." Whilst Mr. Isaac was here he drew up an article, which he sent as a circular to all or most of the preachers. This circular reflected on the ill-treatment he received from the Conference, in reference to a book he had written on "Ecclesiastical Claims." If the obnoxious mass of improprieties referred to in that circular, its cant and religious courtship of the rich and great, cringing and so forth, to mammon and his rites, were published to the world, it could not fail to elicit the conclusion that there is as much religion in the power he complains against, as would be found in a temple of Juggernaut. I give the preachers credit for strangling so effectually, and burying out of sight, a thing which, if published, would have revealed such frightful monstrosities.

Before I proceed to make any further remarks on Mr. D. Isaac, I will try to discharge my memory of what little I recollect of the two who were in appointment at the time of our quitting the old, and entering upon our new chapel. These were Thomas Rought and — Willson. My memory suggests nothing very particular in reference to these, except a trifling incident which connects itself with Mr. Rought, and a man who was the clerk of Burton Church, near Lincoln. This person never failed to remind us of the fact, that he and his master were the two largest things in the parish. This man, though holding so important an office as that of parish clerk, that is the second in importance in Burton, had taken a great liking for Methodism. He was a man of warm passions, had plenty of moisture about his head, would weep like an icicle in the sun; but was accused of being frequently found, on his returning from Lincoln to Burton, carrying too heavy a load of strong drink, a rather common occurrence to men and women possessing a large amount of animal propensities. We were holding, I believe, our last love-feast in our little old chapel, when a momentary silence was observed by our impulsive friend, who, immediately rising, said, "Now, friends,—

Let's improve time, while time lasts,
For time's *no time*, when time's past."

I do not suppose that Mr. Rought would have made any remark on his doggerel, if he had been a man of better character. "There, friend, that will do," was the preacher's response.

Perhaps things of so insignificant import may be thought unworthy of being recorded; yet they go to prove what is said of the Gospel net, which is, "that it encloses fishes of all sorts, good and bad." And what is said of the Church in the present world,—"that wheat and tares make up the mass; that there was a Judas among the twelve." If the irregularities recorded in the scriptures, which connect themselves with men's frailties, were intended for our learning and instruction, why may not what we observe among men serve the same purpose?

I will introduce the few more remarks I intend to offer in reference to Mr. D. Isaac, by making an observation on his well-tutored ear, rendered so capable of trying words, and of seeing at once the false premises laid down by some speakers and writers, by which they were led to draw false conclusions. I am inclined to wish, when I attempt to write or say a word of so great a man, that I had his abilities. But I will try to comfort myself with this fact, that every man is a sciolist. There is no man on earth that knows and can do everything perfectly: there is no man on earth who knows or can do *any one thing* perfectly.

A colleague of Mr. Isaac's, on one occasion, had given out for a text,—"If thy brother shall offend against thee, go and tell him his fault between him and thee alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." The preacher, in handling this text, lost the idea of its subject altogether, and instead of confining his remarks to an offence between two individuals, he referred to offences committed under any circumstances, in public or in private; matters which concerned everybody, but nobody specially; and because a man should hear of such public or private outrages, though not committed against himself, should nevertheless refrain from talking about them; and that if he would reprove the delinquent, he must do it either by writing or by private intercourse, thus recommending such a tissue of cant twaddle as to convince every one that his text had been quite lost sight of. Daniel Isaac, fearing the people should not be able to detect the fallacy of such teaching, took and preached

from the same text the week following, giving the true meaning, which made what we had heard before, truly ridiculous, if not ludicrous.

He was once preaching on a subject which led him to remark on what the people would say of professors of religion boasting themselves, “*that they*, if they were members of any Church, would set so perfect an example as would shame them out of their imperfect moral movements, and just show them what they ought to be.” “Oh! and *you* would set the Church an example; *you would* be a perfect model of *moral* excellence; and *you* would *go as truly and properly* as a *piece of clockwork* turned out by a master hand; *you* would neither stagger nor wriggle, and *your steps* would be as *firm* and *free from slipping*, as if they were made in a chalk pit. YOU! pretty creatures *you* would be! *You set the Church an example!* *You* that can’t relinquish *one vicious habit*, not even your longing after the *ale bench*; who cannot give up *one filthy lust*; *your vain notions* of what *you* would be if *you* were religious, arises from what *you* feel when *you* are what *you* like to be, *drunk!* Then, when *your brains*, if *you* have any, are inflamed by the action of strong drink thereon, you clap your hand on your body, and say, ‘*O, I love my God!*’ keep your hand there, for that is your God. *Your God is your belly*, and *your* “*glorying is in your shame.*” *Such oracles as you should be struck dumb.*”

On another occasion he took for his text,—“*I know you, that you have not the love of God in you.*” He showed, in the handling of this subject, that he was not among those to whom the “*Fear of man bringeth a snare.*” He pointed out, in his quaint and inimitable style, the inconsistencies of religious professors. He reflected upon the conduct of some who would keep their servants at home cooking on a Sabbath morning, and thus preventing them from attending the worship of God; he would say, “*I know you, that you have not the love of God in you.*” If you had you would not keep your servants at home to pander to *your unreasonable and squeamish appetites!* *Have your servants no souls?* *You ought to be ashamed of yourselves!*”

He was no great friend to the buzzing of an organ, which renders singing nearly unintelligible, as words cannot often be distinguished, so that what is intended to be worship is a vile mockery. When speaking of Paul and Silas singing in the

prison at midnight, he said, "they did not *blow* their *praises* into a box of whistles called an organ, or *scrape* them on a *fiddle*." I could greatly multiply instances of his remarks made in the pulpit, were it necessary. But, though his scourge of censure was often coarse and knotty, the milk of kindness, from him, flowed plenteously: his nature was not coarse. I recollect, at one of our quarterly meetings, some one of the party present complained that a neighbour was allowed to fetch water from the pump attached to the preacher's premises. His kind heart immediately "Gave witness of Him" or for him. He said, "I can't find it in my heart to deny my neighbour of a sup of water; perhaps it is the best thing he gets!" Some may perhaps think him rather indiscreet in the management of some of his *charitable deeds*. A needy person once presented himself before him, not overcharged with those necessary things named breeches (for few wore trousers at that time). He went straight to his wardrobe, and took the first pair of breeches he laid his hand on, saying to the man, "There, man, I hope they will do thee good." Before the Sabbath, when his wife was putting his clothes together, she could not find his best breeches: and on her asking him if he knew anything of them, he said, "Why, if thou can't not find them, I expect I've given them away, for I gave a poor man a pair." "Dear, Mr. Isaac," said his most amiable wife, "you have given away your very best breeches! how thoughtless of you!" "Never mind, love, they will do him the more good." But Daniel did a worse thing than that, as far as Mrs. Isaac was concerned, for he took off the clothes-horse her best gown, and gave it to a tramping dirty-looking woman, who came to his door begging.

I should like to say something relating to "the meek and lovely Dr. Hannah," as he has been often (not undeservedly) called. But 'tis difficult to walk where one has to pick one's steps, being always afraid of making a false one. Well, though Dr. Hannah and I are, in every respect, wide apart at present, we were once as intimate as any other two in Lincoln could be, except natural relations. We were together in the Sunday School, and laboured hard together there. I was witness to his first attempt of praying in public; it was a very small congregation in which the attempt was made, there being present no more than Mr. Hannah and myself. This took place in

his father's hay-loft. He, with much apparent difficulty, stammered out a few words; then I followed with a few words, as well as I could, and our meeting concluded. Very soon after, he was urged (for he was very diffident), to make an attempt in the Sunday School, either at its opening or closing. Here he succeeded better, for Mr. Hannah soon found his tongue, and, having plenty to put into it, he soon became eloquent in prayer; and, as Bunyan says,—“As he pulled, it came.” He would think well; and, having a most tenacious memory, his progress was exceedingly rapid; he was fated to rise, and I to sit on a board making baskets, as I had done from seven years of age. He was almost always amongst his books, and I amongst baskets. He was always using means by which he was acquiring an expansion of the nobler powers of man, whilst my brain was closing from the want of a similar exercise.

Dr. Hannah's father was a strong-minded man, and of very liberal principles. He was a General Baptist by profession, but he had a pew in the first Methodist Chapel. As I was often at the old gentleman's house, I had frequent opportunities of observing with what pleasure he contributed to the assistance of his son's studies. No books were denied him which appeared to be necessary, however expensive they might be. I have heard him say that his son John, cost him more than all his sons beside; but he said this with the greatest good humour.

I must not omit to mention our most respected friend (and of all men I have known, the most cheerful), Mr. W. Mawer. It is no hard matter to perceive that I have no plan, no scheme laid out, and that almost everything is snatched up at random; the order of things I produce do not give the idea of a well ordered garden, but is more like an open field, where nature plays at “will be will,” and shows that native negligence, which is not utterly void of charms. I have no garden, therefore content myself to ramble in the fields, which affords me no small degree of pleasure. I find in them what I love, variety and dissimilarity, which afford greater satisfaction than studied stiffness. In this ramble, here, I find the soft smooth ash; there, the trembling aspen; here, the birch; there, the briar, the hawthorn, and the bramble; the king's cup and the cuckoo flower; and the ever-pleasing little daisy on its four-inch stalk, the annihilation of which would cause me grief, I love it so! There goes the

lark ! See that louping frog, how happy it seems to be ! I pity that poor snail, how slowly it moves ! but who knows, perhaps 'tis as happy as that soaring lark ! I have just slipped aside a moment to get my mind fortified that I might be able to endure a transient view of that ruthless monster—death—who had snatched away in the prime of life, and in the full vigour of health, one of the loveliest of men, and at a moment which rendered the act more appalling ; he, with his beloved, had just sat down to dine, when the monster shook his dart, and gave the fatal blow ! O ! the wild impulsive scream of his terror-stricken children !

“Struck with sad anguish at the stern decree !”

they press upon him with frantic words and gestures, crying, “Father, father, dear father, what is it ? It cannot, must not be, that father’s dead !” Alas ! alas ! death had done his work effectually, their father is no more ! Their mourning was the result of earnest grief—not like the mock mourning at a State funeral ! The Society of which he was a Member, was scarcely less affected than were his children and his other relations. The loss of such a man was severely felt, and often referred to, with a sympathy becoming that of professedly Christian friends. To them his name was dear, and often was the name of William Mawer repeated. Nothing short of true religion dwelling in the soul could form a character like his. But what is true religion, and where is it to be seen ? Not in that proud man, whose disdainful lip is turned up at the thought that he is meeting another human being whom he thinks his inferior. Then where ?

I was moving leisurely up by the Waterside one Friday, when I observed a little girl eating an apple ; and I saw a little strange boy with a little tambourine in his hand, watching that little girl so intently, that my attention was completely arrested. The poor child looked at the girl with such earnestness, that it was evident, though fruit was plentiful, the poor thing could not get a taste. I shall never forget his anxious looks. I could have shed a tear just then, if tears were not denied me. This poor little fellow, though I stood watching him, heeded me not. I gave him a penny, saying, “here, my boy, go and buy an apple for thyself.” The delighted little creature could scarcely believe his eyes ; he looked at his penny, turning it over and over, then

at me. I am not boasting myself here, but am endeavouring to show a principle which cannot be dispensed with in a Christian. It will not do to look on misery, and then pass on without rendering assistance, as did the priest and the Levite. If you should ever see a poor broken-down tramp in search of work, or what not, attracted by the smell of hot bread in a baker's shop, looking earnestly at what he is unable to purchase, and you pass along and *forget* that you have seen that object of pity, be assured that God will never forget the cruel hardness of thy heart in thus hiding thyself from thy own flesh.

You may see what *my* views of religion are. It is an easy matter to make a profession of religion, but the practice is another thing ; we may please ourselves with some of the accompaniments of religion, and thus make a plaything of it, whilst our hearts do not determine our choice of the real thing. It is comparatively easy to attend the church or chapel to hear a man talk or read ; you may join in the singing, may listen to or join in the prayers, and, perhaps, get your passions roused, and still come short of the real things. The things I have mentioned are things only in connection with the grand subject, by which you may get stirred up to that which is practical and real. "True religion looks out for the Saviour in distress, when he is in prison, in nakedness, when he is sick, and ministers to him." He knows none but such, he approves none but such ; these things constitute the livery of His people. "Pure religion, and undefiled before God, and the Father, is this : to visit the widows and fatherless in their affliction, and to keep one's self unspotted from the world." I have known large numbers of people with impulsive temperaments, who flamed like seraphs for awhile, seeming to receive the Word with joy, and possessing an ardent untempered zeal, in the exercise of which, one might suppose, from their vociferations, that they could command what influences they pleased, and when they pleased ; but such irregularities in the nature of things cannot continue long ; they resemble too much the convulsions of creatures newly-beheaded. It is "lo ! here, and lo ! there, with them ;" unstable as water, always hunting after exciting scenes. Sometimes they are found all in a flame, and anon as inert as a statue. Daniel Isaac used to say of such,—" Now, they are groaning as at the bottom of the bottomless pit ; but just give them a turn over, and they are up into

the third heaven at once." Were I to bring forward here all of this sort which I have known to have made shipwreck (I was going to say, of faith and a good conscience), of their profession, the number would present a most frightful spectacle, leading us to tremble for ourselves, lest we fall after the same example. The worst feature in the sort just described, is, that they cannot bear to be Christians in common with others, but they must be top sawyers in everything, till, falling into spiritual pride, their heels are suddenly tripped up, and they are no more seen.

One thing I have observed in a great number I have known within these last sixty years, possessing a large amount of animal nature, having a strong and impulsive tendency to violent emotion, who seem to glory in the absence of self-control, making a virtue of it, urging as a plea, for what some believe to be inconsistencies, that the Spirit forces them to do as they do, and despite the remonstrances of the Apostles relative to decencies in worship, declare that because they feel well, they will, in spite of what Paul or anybody else says, shout and make as much noise as they can. So a whole body of people is to be blamed for the franticism of a few, towards whom the church is puzzled to know how to act. Their rant has often got us into unnecessary disrepute; even the papers have fallen coarsely upon us in consequence. I am not going to insinuate that ardent temperaments are to be discouraged; for such may, by proper management, become more useful than those of a milder nature. Saint Paul himself, no doubt, was a man of ardent temperament, both of body and mind, or he could never have been formed into so fine a specimen of human nature as we find him to be. We find him everywhere having due respect for the understanding, ever urging his hearers to have the same: for though he says, "It is good to be *zealously* affected, always, in a good thing;" yet he never fails to remind them of the necessity of being "*temperate* in all things."

Wesley and Whitfield were men of very ardent natures, but they did not let their passions disgrace their higher powers,—those of reason and judgment. These they kept, where they should be, at the top; and their passions were made to be their humble servants. Those men, perhaps, would not have succeeded so well as they did, if they had possessed a nature as gentle as that of Melancthon, as every gift of God is a good gift; but man

most generally spoils it, as he spoiled His work at first, by his disobedience. Nothing will make a man go surely and safely but making the Written Word his guide in all things, instead of following his own fancies to the law and the testimony ; if a man does not speak and act according to these, it is because there is no light in him. This is God's Word,—it cannot be reversed.

Tea meetings were introduced at Lincoln by Mr. W. Dalby. This would be in his last year's appointment here. I do not suppose that such a thing would be attempted while Mr. Isaac was in the Circuit. Mr. Dalby remained in Lincoln a year after Mr. Isaac had left. Mr. Isaac was averse to *junketings*, where scandal seemed to have obtained a license, as it was (if we may follow him in his representations of it), a common practice to indulge too freely in that kind of thing. The first meeting of this kind was held in the School-room on the Banks : this was for the Sunday-school teachers and their friends, a comparatively small party when compared with that of the succeeding year ; and it was an infant in relation to others which followed. I recollect hearing Mr. W. Mawer remark,—“It would be no hard matter to collect a Church of this sort.” Nevertheless these tea meetings have proved to be very interesting affairs ; and having grown so mightily, and having acquired so great a popularity, there is no fear of them falling into a consumption. They have been put to a good use in raising funds in aid of many good and useful objects, as almost everybody knows, and as they are, most commonly, cheerful affairs, are not calculated to increase a fit of melancholy, but help us to bury our cares for an hour or two, and that is worth something. A little speaking for mutual benefit, relating to the object of the meeting, concludes the pleasing and profitable treat.

A rather amusing incident occurred between an old class-leader, about the time these tea meetings were instituted, and Mrs. Dalby, the preacher's wife. I expect the ladies began to be tired of the coal-tub kind of thing they had to cover their heads with, for it was perceived that certain little alterations were taking place in the form of that necessary article of dress. Female ingenuity is, we know, very fruitful when brought into requisition, imagination flitting like a butterfly in the sun, and any shape and every shape is soon produced. Well, the alteration was the insertion of a piece of silk in the form of a horse-

shoe, which was a decided improvement upon the old shape. As soon as Noble Sproul, the old class-leader mentioned above, saw her wearing this thing, thus altered in shape from the old style, he addressed her with—"O! I see you've got the devil's foot upon your head." This old gentleman had been in the 6th Irish Dragoon Guards, who were quartered a good while in Lincoln. When he was discharged, he came to reside here, and being very zealous, and having plenty of time, was made a leader of a class; he was very useful among the poor people, with whom he soon became a favourite; he succeeded in gathering a goodly number of the outcasts of society, and was the means of redeeming several backsliders, on whom he bestowed a deal of labour, following them up with almost untiring assiduity. His successes urged him on to still greater exertions, and though he had an impediment in his speech, which made him hard to be understood, he soon became the leader of more than one or two classes; and though he could not get through with the teeming numbers he had collected, he could not endure the thought of any being drafted into other classes of more comfortable and convenient size. He, in consequence, and as was likely, became rather vain and headstrong, assuming a good deal of authority in meetings for prayer, &c. On one occasion, another, in a meeting where he himself was worshipping, began to conclude the meeting by pronouncing benediction; which, when he perceived, he rose up hastily, giving him a smart stroke on the head with his stick, saying, "Come out of that!" We may see from this, how almost impossible it is for a person who finds himself able to do a thing or two in the church, or elsewhere, without being puffed up with pride or something of that sort. He evidently felt himself very large at that time,—nobody larger,—reminding us of the frog in the fable, which would, if he could, swell himself out to the dimensions of the ox. He had so much of his own way, that he had become petted and spoiled. Jonathan Martin, who burnt down the York Minster, was in his Monday night class. Martin's views and language were of a strange and fanatical character. He was broaching one night some of the stuff his poor disordered brain had been brewing. Noble Sproul, being disgusted with his dizzy-pated twaddle, rose up, and seizing him by his shoulders, bundled him out of the chapel with such rapid haste as would lead one to think poor Jonathan to

have been no more than a shadow. He was also, one Sunday, turned out of one of our Sunday Schools, which was kept in a room joining the Dolphin's Inn. I expect he had been easing himself of some of his rancorous dreamy nonsense. A sight of the Minster would affect him marvellously ; he would often stick scraps of paper on its walls, expressing some dislike of something he had seen. I believe it would have given him the greatest degree of pleasure if he could have been the means of destroying our beautiful Cathedral, the pride and boast of Lincolnshire. But I have not quite done with Noble Sproul ; he was an interesting individual in many respects, and many retained their recollections for a long time, expressing their thankfulness for the encouragement they had received from his advice and earnest prayer. His little cabin, as he called his little dwelling, was always open for anyone, whom he almost always, in his own native Irish style, received with hearty welcome, "Come, sit down," and in every other respect as pleasantly. He would seem to spoil himself a little sometimes by his hasty temper, but looking in his face at such a time was a sufficient snub ; he was calmed in a moment. The wife of Mr. Sproul was a poor imbecile dreadfully afflicted with the asthma ; was scarcely ever able to get to the chapel. I remember to have seen her there but once, which quite upset her. The old gentleman had to indulge her as though she were a child. I have often wondered at his untiring patience and kind treatment of her. His words to her were as kind as his actions. In all these respects he certainly did manifest the spirit of a true Christian. Mrs. Gilliland, the sister of Mrs. Sproul, was of as mild a temperament as I ever knew ; it was as mild as the mildest of summer evenings. The contrast between her and her son John is rather hard to account for ; he was as impulsive as his mother was dispassionate. John never seemed to get the better of his Irish brittleness. When he was chapel-keeper, he frequently gave offence by his harsh and unkindly manners ; in that respect he appeared to be incapable of amendment. When on his death-bed, a lady was requested to go and see him. It was stated to the lady, who had known him well, and had been often annoyed with some of his proceedings, that John was very patient and submissive. "Humph!" said the lady, "then he is much altered from what I ever knew him to be." Well, notwithstanding all

that we have stated of this sort, John had some sterling good qualities. He was as upright as a palm-tree, and always did those duties well for which he had ability ; he did his duty faithfully to the chapel and the preachers' horses, &c. None could do those things better than he, but he never could learn to do fine work,—that is, handing ladies into pews ; he was sure to commit some blunder. Sproul was amongst the number of those who look for something out of the scriptural order of things, as though God would save men by wholesale in answer to prayer, irrespectively of faith or true enlightenment. Hence the expressions,—“Save souls ! save souls ! just now ! just now !” This kind of thing is not to be found in holy writ. If such a view of things were correct, what need was there that Peter should be sent for by Cornelius and his friends ? We see they must be enlightened before they could be saved. When the jailor enquired of Paul and Silas, saying, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved ?” they did not say to him, as many do now-a-days, “Kneel down and we will pray for you, that you may get your soul set at liberty,” but “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” We cannot improve upon Paul and Peter's plan. It is God's way. God will never give his glory to men of vain notion ?

We had a John Smith here for two or three years, who had got it into his head that he should get the whole town converted by this means, and he became so violent in his prayers, that he shook his poor body prematurely in the grave, leaving the object of his terrific exertion unaccomplished. We can only infer, that either his notions were false, or his faith was almost good for nothing. If Paul had been induced to believe such notions, he must have considered his call to go to open the eyes of the heathen superfluous.

I love to hear men labouring with all their might to show men the way to Calvary, teaching them over and over again how they are related to Christ as their Substitute ; how He came into the world for them ; how He put Himself in their stead ; fulfilled all righteousness for them ; and then gave His life for their sins, who Himself knew no sin. If a man have a just view of the ability of the object of his faith, this alone makes faith available. It is nothing in itself ; it is not a condition, as some would have it, of our salvation : it is the impression of the mind

that Christ is able to do all that He professes to do, that is, to save a world or worlds, if other worlds beside ours needed it, there being no end of His merit. One, on a certain occasion, besought him to befriend him; our Lord said to him, "Believest thou that I am able to do this thing?" If a man keep in mind the infinite power of God, which He will make to men in consequence of the satisfaction He has received through the offering of His beloved Son for man's redemption. Faith is just this: a man asks a favour of another, whom he supposes able to confer the same. He sees a motion in the person solicited to consent, he stretches out his hand to receive the gift, but never dreams that there is any merit in the merely reaching out his hand; yet if he had not reached it out he could not have received the gift. Whoever is deeply impressed with the fact that God is able and willing to save him, has but to ask and receive; nothing can prevent his being saved but a reluctance to give up the practice of sin. If all that has been advanced is necessary for a man to understand, how is it possible that an ignorant or untaught individual, dragged into a meeting, can, by the prayers of those around him, be saved there and then, with his eyes closed to the thing so indispensable to be known? Perhaps, in the excitement, he may get his passions roused, so as to lead him to consideration, which may result in his enlightenment, and may thus be brought to the knowledge of salvation. Persons previously enlightened, deciding for Christ, will receive His salvation without any obstacle, not because of the people's prayers, but because his mind is made up to receive Christ as He is offered; he is then saved, whether he knows it or not; and God will not leave him long without some evidence of His acceptance, and that he "is born again, not of corruptible but incorruptible seed." But let not those who witness the conversion of such an one in one of their exciting meetings, boast themselves, as if they, by their violent exertions, have been the means of his salvation. I have heard persons of this impulsive character talking together before the commencement of a service they intend holding,— "We must have souls converted to-night." How monstrous! How almost blasphemous is this! God will never give his sanction to such a rant as this.

Many things crowd upon my memory relating to Methodists. I scarcely know what to fix upon. I see much to be admired;

and many others of an amusing character. I like to make mention of those things which have in themselves the nature of practical Christianity.

It has often been said that Methodists generally are selfish and illiberal. I don't know why it should be said of them; I never found them to be so. Perhaps in so large a number as that composing the Methodist body, some of that description might be found. Such a slander, perhaps, may be founded upon the fact, that the old rules encouraged members to trade with one another; and it may be from another fact, the money gathered at sacraments and lovefeasts, after the necessaries are deducted, is distributed amongst our poor members only, so that if others are relieved, who are non-members, they are relieved out of the benevolent fund; the last mentioned charity is generally distributed by those who are appointed to be visitors of the sick or infirm.

Some of the worst of men have occasionally got connected with the Methodists at Lincoln, from what cause or for what purpose, perhaps it is unsafe to conjecture, as we are not allowed to be either their judges or executioners. It is, however, a fact that several confiding and unsuspecting individuals have been shamefully victimised by this class of high pretenders. A friend of mine, a man of very nervous temperament, who had lost a good deal of money by one of this sort, felt himself so injured and deceived, that he became seriously affected in health, which, I doubt not, contributed greatly to hastening his death. This person made a dashing figure in the world, with money he had not earned, rode high on the waves of popularity, lived high and well, as of course he could; whilst his victim was contenting himself with temperate fare, he would enjoy himself on hot and extravagant suppers. What matter? they come easily. I heard one of his dupes say that he went into his house one night at supper time, and was asked to sit down and partake with them, but he refused to do so, stating to me that he could not partake of what so much surpassed what he allowed himself at home. This man would dash about the country at a fine rate, buying stock, &c., whilst the to-do-with was of easy access. He was very popular in the church, the very cream, always at the top, and nowhere else; a great light shone about him while he kept the sticks blazing, when his light suddenly went out in obscu-

rity. He had got the fame of a man ardently attached to religion, was full of those phrases, deeply sacred in themselves, which so deeply interest the impulsive, the reiteration of which, urged by an ardent spirit in vocal prayer, create a sensation bordering on mania. The shrewd Everitt was carried away with this man at a meeting, finding him to have got hold of the people. None are sooner deceived than Christian people, who never think evil, where no evil seems. It may be said, why mention things like these? I answer, because I find the Scriptures do so. I do not wish, in my concluding remarks, to imitate those preachers, who, in a funeral sermon, make up a character of all bright sparks, leaving the soot in the shade.

All these things should lead us, not unreasonably, to conclude, that Methodism is a thing not to be derided; and though it has been crippled by some matters that had better not have transpired, who will not say,—“Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it.” It is yet a glorious thing, and will, we hope, still continue to bless the world. Where shall we find the great truths of the Gospel so well defined as they are in the hymns of the Wesleys? Which other collection of hymns can equal them in fulness and clearness? They are a perfect system of divinity.

Some I have known (I will but mention one) who was very fond of prating in the pulpit and in prayer meetings, whose grasping worldly propensities were such as to render him unfit for such matters; never looked happy, he would come to a meeting letting down his lip and pulling a long face, would proceed to utter those scripture phrases which, he supposed, hid the sins of men from the eye of God, and tried to persuade himself that if on his knees he told God of his great love to men, and of the virtuous character of the blood of Christ, that he was perfectly safe, though he relinquished none of his evil deeds. A friend of mine came to Lincoln to work for this man, expecting to find one of the best of professing Christians. He soon, however, found out his mistake, which had a most distressing influence upon him. I have seen him sit at the table as if in a reverie, till we had to ask him why he refused to eat: then he would exclaim, “I feel so unhinged about yon man; I feel as though I could not eat. I never was so deceived, never; his lies and dishonesty distract me, and then the thought of his

preaching and all the rest." The men in the shop being aware of his over-reaching and cracking things off at double their value, gave him the name of Jeff, a nickname for a man known in Lincoln as a most notorious liar. I doubt not that this man had got the false notion that Christ would save people in their sins, if they prayed. Who can have such things in remembrance and escape the torments they inflict? This relation affords no pleasure, yet it may not be useless. True charity leads a man to wish that every one might escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust, and get safely to heaven. However, we may derive instruction from things which are grievous, as well as from those that are pleasing. It will be our wisdom to shun those rocks on which others have been broken.

I shall now introduce a character of another stamp altogether; a poor man, a man possessing a seraphic soul, but who had a poor emaciated frame to put it into. The person was popular with the country people, being very ardent and affectionate, had a good flow of language, and was altogether an acceptable local preacher; but alas! he was very poor! and that, with some, is almost an unpardonable sin. This poor thing, who was a cabinet-maker, would be unable, frequently, after his Sabbath day's labours, to go to his work on a Monday morning, and was sometimes ill for days together. Some of our people, who had full purses and empty hearts, would say to him, "had you not better go to the Union? you and your family would be better there than as you are with your poor health." This afflicted soul was acquainted with a poor man, to whom he was always welcome; often would he come to his poor friend to unbosom his griefs, whilst the large tears would force themselves down his lank and shrivelled cheeks. His friend could scarcely forbear wishing himself a little richer for his sake. His poor body soon gave way, letting his seraphic spirit at liberty. I feel as if I could scarcely forgive our friends for letting him be buried by the parish.

I have a goodly number of excellent characters in my eye, who are now ready to fall into the reaper's arms. These have maintained a truly Christian character from their youthful days. The Apostles thought it not unsafe to mention the names of such. But oh! how many whom I have known have winged their flight to the higher regions—we will leave them there.

The first I shall mention is the very oldest member of any Christian Society either in Lincoln or its neighbourhood ; this is the deservedly-respected Mrs. Bainbridge, the widow of the late Mr. Thomas Bainbridge. I doubt not that this lady enjoys the satisfaction and honour, which, by the grace of God, she so richly deserves. It is right that such should have the praise of the churches. Then there is Elizabeth Cater, the daughter of the late Elizabeth Calder, who was one of the four first members who formed the first little Methodist church in Lincoln ; Mrs. Moulton, formerly Miss Dixon, who, I believe, was a member from a child ; Mrs. Bartram, Mrs. Proctor, Mrs. Spencer, Mrs. Norton, and others, of whom honorable mention might be made.

I have one in view whose name I shall never publish. This person has been a professor from about the age of twenty. He has been always poor, and the poor have temptations from which the rich, perhaps, are exempt. Agur feared poverty, lest its temptations should prove too many or too strong for him. This person was led to conceal a fact, and then told a lie to hide it. A lady, in passing her window, saw a goose lie on the board, when a knock was made at the door, and the goose was rendered invisible. "Good morning, Mrs. —. Have you a goose this Christmas?" "A goose, mum ! No, indeed ! we can't afford a thing so expensive." Now what shall we say in a matter of this sort ? What shall be said in extenuation ? in consequence of the suddenness of the impulse under which she acted, faults were committed ; better that none had been so committed, but let not one sinner be too severe with another ; we know not what remorse and grief in penitence this sudden slip might occasion her. We are not in a fit condition to be severe. Let him that is without sin become judge,—"To the merciful God will show Himself merciful."

I knew a man who was connected with the Society here, whom I thought to be one of the most humble Christians I had ever known ; his manner, words, and everything in his conduct seemed to justify such an impression in his favour. This man, who was so humble and unassuming in his poverty, as soon as he got lifted out of the mire and clay, could never once after be induced to turn down his eyes to see the pit out of which he had emerged. He did not even know his formerly most intimate acquaintances. Some poor people are very desirous of riches ! It

will, no doubt, be better for them to be content with such things as they have. Few who have been very poor make a good use of riches.

It may be thought a matter of trivial consequence to say much about Carlton or its little Society ; but we may hurry away too rapidly from objects which at first sight do not present anything remarkably striking. We should scarcely have heard of such a place as Woolsthorpe, near Grantham, if it had not been the birth-place of one of the greatest men in the world, Sir Isaac Newton. And though we have no Sir Isaac Newton to boast of in relation to Carlton, yet we have men to mention in connection with that place whose influence may penetrate even farther than his. His great knowledge must vanish away with the systems of his contemplations, but the results of the knowledge of the glorious Gospel will continue through endless ages. One of the Nicholsons has been an itinerant preacher for many years, in the old Wesleyan body ; three of his brothers are zealous local preachers. The son of Mr. Thomas Nicholson, an intelligent well-read young man, is also in the ministry. May God give him abundance of health. It is easy to infer how great results may arise from small beginnings. It is just possible that had not that little Society been formed at Carlton, that none of these excellent men might have been called into the field of Gospel labour—perhaps had not been converted. The great ones of the earth, to whom is confided most commonly, its management, its pomps and splendours, and who are too often the envy of the unthinking poor, have, generally speaking, a poor appreciation of those higher and more substantial things, which the spiritually enlightened of all ages have preferred. The dazzle and glare they make in this vain life seems to be congenial with their propensities ; apparently contented that their portion is on earth. We are not at a loss for a comparison of heavenly with earthly things, one already being made to our hands by one whose decision cannot be disputed ; his preference to the former being decisive. We need not recite instances, being so common in the Gospel. Paul understood the subject perfectly, putting into one scale the things he once counted gain to him, but which now he considers not worthy to be weighed at all, appearing to him but as dung and dross, and lighter than vanity when contrasted with the contents of the other scale,

even the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, his Lord. That poor man has been badly taught, and has made a poor use of his understanding, who can look on the gaudy trappings and splendid pageantry which the rich are capable of producing, and indulge the thought that there is any reality in it, or that ought he sees is worthy of his desire as an intelligent being, and a being intended to live for ever. If a man, having light, spiritual light from heaven, has one lingering wish for such vanities, he ought to be ashamed of himself. The things invented to make the weak-headed gape and stare, are as certainly the toys of the rich and vain, as those of your childhood or boyhood were yours. And if you could see the disquietude, chagrin, and mortified pride, as well as vexation, which attend these showy exhibitions, you would despise rather than desire them. "Turn away thine eyes from beholding vanity." We want little in this life beside food and raiment, and with these the Apostle says we should be content. All that a man wants to make him great and happy lies in a small compass. The lip of truth declares it—"The kingdom of heaven is within you." "The kingdom of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." How much peace, think you, attends those exhibitions of pride just hinted at, and what kind of joy is found amongst it all? The men raised up by the providence of God at Carlton are employed in sowing immortal seed, which will not fail to produce its like, and, we doubt not, with glorious increase. Long may they live, and long may they be made, in the hands of God, a real blessing to the world!

Mr. Watmough mentions the forming of a small Society at North Carlton, in 1815. To this Society I was appointed Leader. The forms they have in use to this day, were purchased with the first money collected by me of the members, in aid of the cause of Methodism. Ground for chapels could never be obtained either at the Carltons or at Burton, as is often the case where a large eagle spreads her wings, as the eagle really does over her brood, saying, "all these are mine." The father and mother of the Messrs. John, Thomas, James, and George Nicholson, were in this little Society. Mr. Elsom's father and mother, at whose house the Society met, at North Carlton, were also members.

This rather long Sabbath day's journey reminded me of the

labours of those indefatigable and hardy men the local preachers, who were not then so well provided for as at the present time ; they had then no car in requisition for their long journeys. There are those who cannot understand how men can sacrifice their time and strength, as such men are known to do. I recollect how some of such used to be ridiculed and jeered as they went and returned from their self-denying and truly Christian labours. I have heard them called after, and asked " where their bacon bags were ?" and " look at his pockets !" They, it appears, could not conceive thoughts contrary to their own selfish notions, hence their coarse egotistic observations, such as—" I will never believe that these men would do as they do, if they were not well paid for it ;" " their intentions are to swindle the unsuspecting country people, and bring away with them cheese and bacon." It is not likely, however, that men should appreciate what they cannot understand : spiritual things are foolishness to those who never received the Spirit of the Holy Gospel into their hearts : hence, when they read of the acts of the Apostles, and the hardships they endured, their poverty and untiring zeal, they look on such relations as fables they are not bound to believe as realities, making their own contracted views the measure by which they measure all men and all things. We may say of them, " O souls bow'd down to earth, strangers to heaven." The moment a man receives the truth in the love thereof his heart is enlarged, and he no longer lives to himself : if he be naturally close-fisted, as we term it, his knuckles are rapped and his hands fly open ; his affections, which were closed to all but himself, are expanded ; his head having been opened by the key of David. He no longer says, " Am I my brother's keeper ?" but, as he is called to do, he loveth his brother as himself, and can no longer be careless of his brother's condition.

My walk to North Carlton was not always solitary. Occasionally I had volunteers who offered themselves as company-keepers, which I acknowledge as a treat, as the company of friends is always pleasant and cheering. Thus the tediousness of solitude is relieved. My task was not all labour ; I had to anticipate the pleasure of meeting with pleasant faces, for no pleasure is like that of Christians when they meet, being all under the same divine and all-assimilating principle. If the Christian has joys, they are not like the trumpery made-up joys

of the worldling, which are like the crackling of thorns under a pot, which speedily end in darkness and smoke. If they have tears, they are not like the tear of the miser, which starts in his eye at some sad tale to which he has been compelled to listen, but which he instantly endeavours to suppress, his tear coldly starts in his eye, but "freezes as it falls, and falls down ice."

I often think that if our preachers would strictly keep to the Scriptures, they would have fewer words to throw away than they have at present. We hear phrases every time we hear a sermon preached, which we cannot find written in the Word of God; I am puzzled to know whence they obtain their archangels, which are so constantly tumbled about, as if they were as numerous as the stars of the firmament. We read in the Book of Daniel, of Michael the archangel, but there is something so incongruous about it, that we are at a loss to determine in a moment who this personage was. We find Satan disputing with him about the body of Moses, whose place of sepulture he wished to discover, perhaps, that Moses, by his wiles, might have been made an object of religious worship. It is said of Michael, that he "durst not bring a railing accusation" against the devil, but said, "the Lord rebuke thee, Satan." We find this Michael afterwards introduced as one of the chief princes, by the man Gabriel, who was sent to minister to Daniel, and to give him information on certain subjects about which his spirit was deeply concerned. Now what can be made of him. We see him represented as one of the chief princes—one of the eternal three, for this we shall find him to be, and in the Scriptures too. He was to stand for the children of Daniel's people, and in what sense could he stand for the people of Israel, but in the sense which Caiaphas prophesied of him, "as dying for the people that the whole nation might not perish, and that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." It may be asked "is there not something related of this personage which forbids the thought that He was of the 'eternal three?'" Not more than what He affirms of Himself referring to His humanity—"My Father is greater than I." He who uttered those words uttered these likewise,—"I and my Father are one." This was He who was in the wilderness with the children of Israel, and who was afterwards "made flesh and dwelt amongst us," and who was betrayed and murdered by those to whom He

was sent. It is said that "the dead shall be waked by the voice of the archangel and the trump of God," terms manifestly in apposition, having but one meaning. Our Lord himself declared that the time should come when all that are in their graves shall hear His voice. His voice, then, is "the voice of the archangel;" He is the "trump of God." Gabriel is never called an archangel. Daniel calls him "the man Gabriel." He was sent to Elizabeth, to Mary, and perhaps to Cornelius. He was appointed to stand in the presence of God, ready to deliver the behests of Heaven to the children of men. It is not unlikely that he had been once a man on earth, for it is not necessary that he should have been created a spirit to become an angel, which means nothing more than a messenger. Whence have poets derived their rant about archangels,—

Thee, while the first archangel sings."

Mind this, the first archangel sings to no one. All the angels sing to him,—

"Thee to praise in hymns divine,
Angels and archangels join."

I hope we shall never be induced to sing such stuff as this in future; but confess, with shame, that we have done it. You may sing,—

"The great archangel's trump shall sound,
Whilst twice ten thousand thunders roar."

But don't forget that Christ asserts all this as being His own glorious prerogative, a display of His peerless power !

I have met with some who think anything is good enough to put into the ears of God; it is, they say, of no consequence how our words are disposed of; they may come out anyhow, head or tails, legs or wings, it matters not, so that we feel right. Do we get these loose thoughts upon this subject from the examples we find in the Holy Book? I fear there is too much of this making a plaything of religion. When John saw the Saviour in the Isle of Patmos, he fell at His feet as dead. If Michael be not what we have represented him to be, who was he? or what was he? And where are the archangels which we have been dreaming about, talking of, singing of, and making to sing?

I may be thought to be too fastidious in confining myself to Scripture representations, and in casting overboard the inventions

of men, preferring rather to follow the divine teaching, than the teaching of men who use, from generation to generation, words which have never been turned over or examined. Look at the phrase,— “means of grace,” which is everlastingly in our mouths: we might be led to suppose from its popularity, that it were to be found in the Holy Scripture; but where is there to be found a phrase at all similar to it? I regard no usage which has the authority of men for its foundation; the Holy Scriptures being my sole guide. To me it is next to blasphemy to attribute grace to anything but to the fountain of grace itself. The Word informs us that “grace and truth come by Jesus Christ.” Paul speaks of “the gospel of the grace of God,”—“We saw his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten Son of God, full of grace and truth.” It is by the “grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that we are to be saved,” and “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ” is invoked to “be with us all evermore.” It is as ridiculous to make anything beside Christ the means of grace, as it would be to make anything less than God the creator of the world. Some have said, “We use the phrase in an accommodated sense.” We use it in an unjustifiable, because in an unscriptural, sense: and the sooner we abandon the use of it the better. Another phrase we constantly hear, which is nowhere to be found in the acts and sayings of the Apostles; we might suppose from its commonness that it might be seen in every paragraph of their writings. Did any of the Apostles, after the day of Pentecost, ever pray that “God would send down the Holy Ghost?” or did they anywhere urge any of the churches or any individual to do so? The Apostles were not likely to be guilty of such an inconsistency; they knew well that when the promise of the Father had once begun His glorious mission, it was to continue to the end of time, the dispensation of grace to the world. Our Lord says, “I will send you the Holy Ghost, who shall abide with you to the end of the world.” I have heard some say, in reference to this subject, “Christ says, ‘God will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.’” You forget that the dispensation had not then commenced. We pray “take not thy Holy Spirit from us” ever since the day of Pentecost. The Spirit has been “convincing it of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.” We do all that is good by “the Spirit that dwelleth in us.” We can do nothing really good without the Holy Spirit, which never is absent from

believers. It is as ridiculous to pray that the Holy Spirit may be poured down upon us, as it would have been in the disciples praying that the Messias might be sent down to them while He was amongst them. Had they done this, what would He have said to them ?

Numberless scriptures might be cited to prove His continually abiding on earth. I am much afraid that we commit more sin upon our knees in professed vocal prayer, than in any other thing we engage in. Our random expressions, with that want of veneration, so strikingly apparent in many of those rambling orations, which scarcely contain anything worthy to be put into the ears of the All-intelligent and Almighty Being. In one church he is addressed four or five times in the morning service in one form of words. If Her Majesty the Queen were to be thus treated by an individual in the space of an hour, would he not be sent to a Lunatic Asylum ? would such vain repetitions be tolerated ?

In all ages of the church there have been those who have caused her grief. Paul had continual sorrow in his heart for his brethren, according to the flesh, who rejected the counsel of God against themselves, having carnal notions of the reign of the Messiah. He prayed to God for them, and though he knew, whilst they remained in unbelief, his prayers would have very little effect, yet he ceased not to pray for them, because he knew that it was the will of God that all men should "come to the knowledge of God and be saved." We have always had a few, and, thank God, but a few, who have been the cause of inexpressible grief, and of the most deep and long-continued sorrow, and the utterance of thousands of prayers. I refer to those who, unhappily, had contracted the habit of hard drinking, against which they for awhile have striven bravely ; but who, in an unlucky hour of temptation, have been overcome by this, their besetting sin, burying the hopes of those who longed so ardently for their stability. Often have we had to tax our patience to the uttermost on the account of these, whose frequent lapses we have had to witness. Such persons generally possess strong passions, and might be very useful, if their unnatural propensity for drink did not lead them captive ; almost invariably, when our confidence in their condition had become a little flattering, that we had just then arrived at the verge of disappointment, and

were fated to hear of another stumble. If they had wisdom enough to abide by the old maxim, "Resist the beginnings," they would find it to be to their advantage; a reckless self-confidence which leads them to venture on a strength which is only supposed, not real. They only fancy their mountain to be strong; hence their presumption is almost certain to prove disastrous. They seem to be taken with a vain-glorious feeling, which leads them into Forgetful Green, as Bunyan has it, "another step, and they are found on the enchanted ground." Perhaps an old acquaintance pops in upon him with a "how do you do, friend?" and invites him to a glass of something which he has known not to be disagreeable to him; and now, having become full of high notions of his acquired ability to govern himself, surely he may now accede to a request so reasonable without danger, and without another thought, away he runs into the trap and is taken once more. The first glass is taken, which might not have done him much harm, but O! he is a *man now*, and not a child; surely he can take another and keep his resolves to be a sober man. We see in things of this sort a dominance of propensities over reason; the brute running away with the man. Here, indeed, we see the *Centaur* not fabulous. These remarks may apply not only to drinking propensities, and their results, but to the sway of passions of any kind, where reason ought to rule. But is there anything in all that we have advanced in relation to such individuals to induce us to despise or trample such under feet? Who can do so and be guiltless? All are sinners, and should regard themselves as such: who will venture to be so presumptuous as to affirm that he is less a sinner than the one he is led to despise? I am not offering my thoughts here without a guide. I have the Apostle's own teaching before me, which I do not intend to transgress. Paul assumes, then, that no man is anything, and has not an inch of ground for boasting himself against any human being, in any circumstances whatever, but are exhorted to treat the fallen with consideration, being themselves liable to fall as low as those they might be led to despise. The intention of Peter's vision was to convince him that his purpose of mercy in Christ was as surely intended for every one of the Gentiles, as it was for every one of the Jews, and that no man, while on earth, is to be called common or unclean, because Christ has cleansed every man, and every man is justified

the moment he believes this with his whole heart, fully resolved to crucify the old man, the man of sin, with his affections and lusts. Some of the above remarks are drawn from facts in relation to one of the unfortunates made mention of above. Our friends did not treat him with that lenity which those who are sensible of their own frailty ought to do.

Many things in the course of sixty years, which once were well known, seem to slip away from our recollection, becoming half-buried in the lumber which has been accumulating in such space of time. When this lumber-room—the brain—is entered, that its contents may be ascertained, we almost immediately perceive the ghosts of half-buried thoughts rising up like the dust of an old book-shelf, which, for years, had remained undisturbed. It appears to me that nothing is totally lost from this repository, which has been once well digested. I see arising before me a host of nondescripts, for I know not what to call them. I say a host, for they have always been more numerous than profitable, either to themselves or others, causing a great deal of uneasiness to churches which were anxious for their establishment, urging them to decide for Christ. I have heard hundreds of sermons in which this class of hearers has been referred to, and to whose consciences the most stirring appeals have been made; but I have heard it remarked that it was “like ploughing upon stones.” Many of these are to be found regularly attending preachings, and prayer-meetings occasionally, and if such attended the Parish Church as regularly as they attend dissenting meetings, would be thought excellent Church members. These, generally, hear the Word preached as if it were a matter in which they had no real concern. They like to hear good preaching, and have their preference of preachers and of subjects, yet they make, it would seem, no real advances: like the horse working the mill, round and round he goes, but ending where he began. Some of these, by the light they received under a faithful ministry, have, on their death-bed, found their way to Calvary; being saved, as by the skin of their teeth. Others of this unhappy class have fallen into snares, and have vanished altogether. Some of the younger of both sexes have been badly matched, and, for shame, have absented themselves from hearing the Word of God which is able to save the soul: several of such have been observed to fall lower and lower, till

they were ashamed to see an old familiar face, and would be glad to pass unnoticed, not knowing what joy their conversion would create in the souls of those they try to shun. I can sympathise a little with preachers, who evidently have to strain their inventive powers, to produce something by which they hope to reach the heads and hearts of this discouraging class of hearers. These people will readily assent to all you say to them, will receive your instructions or reproofs with perfectly good humour, and will say "the time will come in which all will be right." Yet week after week, month after month, and year after year they remain unaltered. O ! my God, awaken such, and deliver them from the strange enchantment in which they are held ! Our hopes respecting these have been so often raised, and so often disappointed, as to make the hands hang down in despair. The wise man says,— "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick," and "Disappointed hope is misery." How often, after a thousand prayers (ineffectual indeed), made for such, have we been so discouraged as to be tempted to cease praying for them altogether ? But what our God has made to be our duty must not be yielded to any consideration, as the final success of the importunate widow instructs us to persevere in despite of all seeming obstacles. In our churches and congregations we mostly possess all the elements necessary for a full application of a sermon. We have the young, the old, the middle-aged ; beginners, those who continue faithful ; the persevering, and plenty of backsliders—too many !

Some splinters from the old ship we have to notice, which, perhaps, never would have been broken from her, if Wesley could have continued to direct her, or if men of his genius could have been found as his true representatives. Wesley foresaw what, if carried out, would destroy the simplicity of his system. He leads the people of his charge to sing,—

"Never let the world steal in ;
Fix a mighty gulph between."

There has been, since Wesley's days, a solicitous angling for large fishes ; to these anglers the taking of a salmon was of more consequence than the taking of a hundred sprats. And so, instead of the Gospel being, as at the first, principally preached to the poor, the net has been more principally spread to enclose the

rich ; so that a money power has been the boast of the infatuated. Many excellent men with whom I have conversed, have regretted to see what they had no power to control ; but, notwithstanding, the numbers of true and upright men attached to, and raised up in, the old ship, will, no doubt, keep her still a fine sailing vessel. The first splint we shall notice, essayed to assume the appellation of *primitive*. This designation was not readily acceded to, as the elements, which professed to form this new association, did not very well agree with the pre-conceptions the people had formed of Wesley and his first followers. They could not readily be brought to believe that Wesley was a *ranter*, or that his first followers were of that hot-headed description and impulsive character, as those who separated from the old craft at that time. This piece of timber was a long time before efficient hands could be brought to work at it heartily, and it was long before it could be put into an eligible position, but the workmen being stirred up to extra exertions, and friends coming forward to assist, the thing began to assume a more encouraging aspect ; we saw the vessel rising into form, till, finally, a fair-going, and a tolerably well-manned ship appears. In proportion as the froth of extravagant emotions was cooled down, and was succeeded by a growing intelligence, so, in proportion, has the respectability and usefulness of this section of the church increased. It appears that, where the truth is preached, though that truth may be encumbered with many things which appear to be irrelevant to its real prosperity, yet it will succeed to a certain extent. This fact probably may give encouragement to persons of wild and ungovernable temperaments, to say "good is done, and we don't care what the world says of us." Is such a strain of talking in accordance with the directions given us by the Holy Apostles ? Did they say "we care not what the world says of us ?" They say, "Walk wisely towards those that are without ;" and, referring to some apparent disorders, they, in reproving them, said, "Will they not say that you are mad ?" "Let your moderation be known unto all men." Such people, who content themselves in seeing a little good done, where a deal of rant and inconsistency are taking place, never stop to ask themselves, " how much more might be done under a better management ?" neither do they consider the harm that may be done to those whose more temperate constitutions cannot be

brought to approve of what their reason will not justify, because that nothing in justification can be found in the acts and deeds of the Apostles, of wildness, nor of anything which has not the appearance of truth and soberness. Some of those persons who are complained of as being noisy, say, "it is because they have the Spirit, and that they that are not as they, are dead." Is the Spirit noisy, then? Are not their own spirits badly managed? being not put under the control of their understandings? Do not their passions rule them? and not the higher powers of their nature, by which they are distinguished from the beasts? How can gentleness, and meekness, and temperance in all things, exist at the same time with overflowings of extravagant emotions, which make men take the semblance of maniacs? Will any one dare to account for this manifest incongruity? If men of business, who have zeal enough most commonly, were to carry on their affairs in that wild and reckless manner in which some religious meetings are conducted, would it not be said they were mad? I conversed with one of their first preachers, when a reference was made to what many, at that time, called "wildfire;" he said nothing in vindication of the appearance of such wildfire, but remarked simply, that "where there was much *wildfire*, there might be a *little of the true*." I have met with very few, who, when tested, would say much in defence of what we have been treating. Many strong-minded and excellent men, have, of late years, been employed by this Society as ministers, who were not likely to have their judgments misled by what the Scriptures do not justify. I have no recollection of a single individual who was extravagantly impulsive in his youth, who remained so in after life.

There are men to be found who never seem to have made a study of themselves. They have never given themselves the trouble to enquire into the deceptiveness of human passions, hence their likes and dislikes are sufficient with them to determine their actions. But they soon find themselves, for want of a little reflection, entangled in a deceptive maze. This they might have escaped, if they had allowed "Monarch reason" to decide for them. First impressions are often wrong; they want looking at before they are acted upon. Would Joanna Southcote have attracted so many besotted followers, if men had used their understandings aright? It may be thought that I am more con-

cerned that men should have light in their heads, than that they should have love in their hearts. Now, consider, can a man have any true affection for an object whose qualities he has never considered? We must see the beauties of religion before we can love or embrace it. Paul was sent to open the eyes of men to show them the interest they had in Jesus Christ. The subject must be well understood before it can be heartily received. We must see how God can be just, and yet the Justifier of him that believeth in His Son. He must comprehend, or admit, the great fact that the infinite merit of his spotless Son, is accepted of the Father, as a full and sufficient Redemption price for the whole world; and is available to every soul of man, who will, by simple faith, receive the same. The moment a man can be brought to understand how Christ put Himself in his stead, making an Atonement for his past sins, and can cast his whole soul on Him, in faith that He has thus become his Redeemer, is saved. The Primitive Methodists have preached this glorious doctrine, hence their success and great prosperity. Paul could rejoice at the Gospel being preached, though preached through envy and strife. Thank God, we know of no such preaching of the Gospel; the truth is preached in love!

If that fallacious doctrine, "Once in grace always in grace," so calculated to destroy the energies of men and to send them to sleep, had been preached, instead of the conscience-stirring, heart-awakening, soul-rousing doctrine, which so many thousands have pressed to hear, what would be the state of things at the present time? There was a chapel where the softly-soothing, soul-deceiving doctrines of Calvin were preached. Some friends, having a little tin to spare, and approving of the doctrine of unconditional election, set themselves to work, and the above chapel was raised, to which the name of Zion Chapel was given. But there was nothing about it to lead one to suppose it to be fated to become like the famous Mount Zion of the Scripture, which was the "joy of the whole earth." They had a humble, good man, as harmless as a sheep, for a minister, and, for a while, a respectable congregation used to assemble, but it soon became a dwindling affair, going down lower and lower, till the wheels of this Gospel chariot finally stood still.

I don't know that I should have made any remarks here on this little Calvinist affair, had it not been that I had had relatives

who were attached to that false cause, and who had been kept in mental bondage, through teachings they had listened to in the chapel referred to above. The poor deluded mortals were always waiting for some special call,—something not belonging to the call of to-day; see the infatuation of error! it leads men to look for what is nowhere promised, and closes the eyes to what is placed straight before them; I have heard these persons say, “There is a day of grace for every one, which must be waited for, and embraced when it arrives.” This fictitious day of grace, which is to be somewhere in the future, will never arrive to those who put off to-day: for “to-day is the accepted time” in this matter, there is no promise for to-morrow. This is the day in which every soul is interested in the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus: show me a man who fell not in Adam, and I will show you a man that has no interest in Christ, and cannot be saved this very day; they that say the contrary, go about to make God a liar. Where is there to be found in all the Book of God, that which excludes a single individual from the grace of God that is in Christ Jesus. The Apostle is so particular in stating his views on this matter, lest any one should suppose himself left out, he reiterates the subject so as to exclude all doubt. All Jews and all Greeks used to compose the whole world, but that no mistake might be made, leaving a slave to think he might be forgotten, Paul takes care that none shall be deceived in the matter. Not a single individual is excluded from the covenant of grace; Jews and Greeks, barbarians and heathens, bond and free. This is the glorious Gospel of the grace of Him, who says, “All souls are mine.”—Our great and glorious Heavenly Father has ordained that His good news be preached to every creature which has a soul. Much as Calvin is respected by many, his doctrine goes to make our glorious and benevolent God as partial to, and contracted as, his shrivelled creed. Calvin was a great man, but they are little men who receive and propagate his great errors? It is because great men have advocated great errors, that great errors have become popular; Oh! such a man says so, and thus little men become their dupes. I have lately conversed with individuals, who have received their mystifications from the source above alluded to; I asked them if they had received the salvation of the gospel, they contented themselves with saying, that “God knew who would be saved and who would not.” Christ comes to

these mistaken persons, with His hands laden with gospel blessings, which he offers to them freely, saying, "this is the time, no more delay," they look at the offered grace, excusing themselves, saying, "Thou knowest who will receive Thy grace, and who wilt refuse; we will satisfy ourselves, with the thought, that Thou knowest all about these matters," but they will not so much as hold the hand for what is so freely offered, and which they so much need, expecting the thing will be thrust upon them if they get it at all. These persons leave God to do what He commands them to do; if they stir a peg, they are work-mongers, merit-mongers, and nobody knows what beside; Christ says, "come unto Me," but they will not stir, so they remain unsaved. It must be so, Christ cannot believe for them, and will not do what He commands them to do. These last remarks are not intended to apply to Calvinists generally, for many of such in their actions exceed their creed, and do many things they say they have no power to do. These I have particularly in view, are they who have got the notions they have from Calvinistic teaching, resting in the vain hope, that some time they will enter, or may be forced into, a safer state of religious enjoyment. But as they will have it, that they have no will in moral matters, they rest satisfied to sleep on; so that, if they remain unsaved, it is because God would have it so, though He calls every one to believe and be saved.

Wesleyanism is a tree that will flourish under any circumstances. It has in it the principles of real vitality; it may occasionally be cramped or stunted by adverse winds or improvident management in culture, yet so strong is the principle of life, that it is seen to burst forth, despite everything opposing as an obstacle. Why does this tree flourish so manifestly? Because it is so much like the "tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations," and always exhibits an abundance of fruit. Every one that looks on this tree knows that he is invited to partake of its fruit, and live for ever. None are excluded but the obstinately wicked; it offers life to all. This beautiful tree, some years since, had to be subjected to a fierce wind, which seemed to arise out of elements which had attached themselves to it. Lookers on, apprehensive that these elements might prove seriously detrimental to the tree, if not removed, entreated those who had much to do with its culture, to remove

those things of threatening aspect, and though great numbers joined in the request, no heed was taken, but a seeming carelessness of consequences. I saw a Watcher above looking on, who had a pair of scales in one hand, in the other He held the wind ; he looked on those, who, with great anxiety, begged the tree might be spared, till He observed their forlorn and withered hope ; then I saw the scale, where truth and right were found, preponderate, and that in which were presumption and misrule, rise and kick the beam ; then the Watcher let go the wind from His fist. Ah ! it was a wind ! down comes a mighty branch laden with the finest of fruit, with leaves, large and of beautiful green. In its fall it lost neither leaf nor fruit ; under the eye of the Watcher it was taken up and planted in a rich soil, well watched, and well watered, where it thrives marvellously. Some of the old men, who stuck to the old tree, put on yellow spectacles, declaring they could see nothing but signs of sickliness and corruption, either in the leaves or fruit ; so they tried to show that the tree had only been eased of a useless branch, the removing of which would be conducive to the health of the tree. I happened to be one who was broken off. I never heard any chuckling or unholy rejoicing at what had happened to the old and once beloved cause, which had been so great a blessing to our town and neighbourhood. Sad and sorrowful we remained for a time, like those who bewailed the destruction of their beautiful temple at Jerusalem, till aroused to rebuild, and make the best they could of it. Methodism received so severe a shock at the time in question, as we hope will never be repeated. This, I believe, is the wish of all who remained, as well as of all those who were separated through that untoward affair. Many, though excellent men, who remained in the old body, were deeply grieved to witness the desolations succeeding the unhappy circumstances referred to above, setting themselves heartily to work to repair the breaches which were so evident in many places. Mr. Shovelton, and such as he, who laboured so assiduously to bring about a state of things so desirable to be seen in a Christian Church, succeeded admirably. Much was he spoken of and beloved, he making himself as one of the people, only seeking their welfare, created an ardent endearment which will not soon be forgotten.

An old preacher, with whom I was familiar when he first

went out as a local preacher, and whom I often accompanied when going into the country to his preaching appointments, remarked of us, who separated from the old body for conscience sake, that "we were all a bad set." I cannot think that this old gentleman, whom I knew to be very humble and kind-hearted when young, could possibly be so bitter against us as his words might lead some to think. He appears to have had some notions, which he had settled down to, disturbed, at the time the disruption occurred, which excited him to speak more warmly than his real nature would prompt him to do. We know how light the froth of vain words is. We can afford, however, to bury out of sight a thousand unpleasant things that occurred between the expelled and the preachers at the time the separation took place. Bitter remembrances cannot live long in hearts which the Holy Ghost inhabits. Nevertheless, our complaint was a true complaint, and our request proper and Scriptural, and the opposition most grievous and improvident, as, I doubt not, thousands of the best friends of Methodism have admitted.

So little has been said of late years relating to the unhappy split by which we were severed from the old body, that those who were boys at the time have to ask "why we left the big chapel?" We cannot say to them, "do not trouble yourselves about that matter," lest it should be said in reply, "Why did you trouble yourselves about it?" What our reply to such questions was, need not be repeated here, as available sources of information are of easy access. The wish of the people that lay-delegates should be sent to Conference to represent them, was not a thing thought of only a few months before Conference was memorialised upon the subject, but had been long desired and long talked about. I heard Mr. William Mawer, of excellent memory, speak of the desirableness of such a thing nearly fifty years ago; where I heard him speak of this matter was in the room we called the vestry, which was attached to the chapel, which stood on the site the Savings' Bank now occupies. I don't wish even the ghost of this affair, which has caused so much heart-burning, to be seen to the disturbance of our present quiet. For my own part I took very little interest in the turmoil, but waited patiently till I should see what would turn up. It never entered into my head to stop supplies, I paid to the very last, neither did many know my mind or what might be the course I should pursue after the

final resolves of the Conference. I hoped to the end, but when my hope was lost, I made myself scarce. I did not do as a leader of a large class used to do week after week—this man would get a number of young people about him, to whom he would insinuate his disapprobation of the doings of preachers and of the Conference, and, though he had used his glib tongue of slander so liberally against the system, he stuck to it when a real cause to separate from it presented itself. I nearly shook that inconsistent pretender to pieces by one reproof of his unfairness, I never saw such a miserable conscience-stricken ghost in my life, when I referred to what I had known him to be guilty of, especially in reference to double-dealing, nevertheless, doubt not, that he has long since been in heaven.

Those who think that the Reformers cannot rejoice in the prosperity of those who attach themselves to the old cause, are very much mistaken; we love to hear that their chapel is well filled, and that signs of prosperity attend the ministrations made therein; we know the doctrines therein preached are calculated to save and bless the people, and would not prevent a person's having a preference for going there, if we could. I had a grandson, who was attracted, by the kind solicitations of some excellent young men, to attend the Wesley Chapel, I never put one syllable into his ear to dissuade him from going thither, but gave him every possible encouragement to cleave to the cause of his choice. They who can witness the exertions of those numerous young men who are connected with Wesley Chapel, and cannot rejoice in spirit, have something within them beside the "mind that was in Jesus." I see many of these connected with every good thing—Ragged Schools, Sunday Schools, Bands of Hope, Temperance Movements, &c.; who can look on these, and not wish them to be multiplied a thousand fold?

We have many young fellows of the same cast as those hinted at above, in connection with our less, but not less zealous cause, in Silver-street, these, as their hearts have been touched by the Divine Spirit, will, we doubt not, throw in their utmost energies to help forward the ark of truth; these will joyfully join with the aforementioned in many good projects, amalgamating their strength, and cultivating that largeness of heart which scorns to be cramped by trifles; whatever different opinions those who are quickened with Christ hold, being all possessed of the Spirit.

which worketh the same effects in all, making every one a living stone in that glorious and spiritual being, the universal church on earth, the true ground and pillar of the truth, which cannot fail to the end of time, will not fail to show that we are all one in Christ Jesus, saved by the same faith, having the same spirit, tending to the same end, having always in our view the glory of God in the salvation of men, not living to ourselves, but to Him who died for us, and rose again.

A METHODIST CLASS MEETING.

Leader.—“Well, friend, thou art getting near the end of thy journey. ‘How is it with thee?’”

Member.—“Well, I’ve served the Lord sixty years; He’ll never forsake me!”

Leader.—“Dost thou ground thy hope that He will never forsake thee upon thy sixty years’ service? and bring it before Him as a plea, that He ought not to forsake thee? I should have liked better to have heard thee say, ‘God has borne with my ill manner, my frailties, and sins these sixty years. I am convinced that I have not one plea to urge on the ground of my own righteousness, which I see to be but as filthy rags. I have nothing but the blood of Jesus to rest my naked guilty soul upon.’

‘I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me.’”

Leader.—“Well, Thomas, how art thou getting on?”

Member.—“Pretty well, I hope. But I should like to have a clearer evidence, that all is going on right within; these plaguey doubts and fears, I wish I could get out of them; I am tempted sometimes to think I am wrong altogether; I feel the want of something I should like to have in my experience.

‘O could I make these doubts remove,
These gloomy fears that rise!
And view the Canaan which I love,
With unclouded eyes!’”

Leader.—“ ‘The Canaan which you *love*,’ you say; now, Thomas, who put the love of Canaan into your heart? Nothing beside the good Spirit of God could fix it there; the heart is naturally averse to such things; sweet waters cannot issue from a bitter fountain; every good thing found within us is from the Father of lights, in whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning; all that is good is divine. Guard that holy principle the good Spirit has put within thee, and ‘be not faithless but believing;’ use grace and have grace; ‘hold fast that thou hast;’ doubt no more. Now, my old and tried friend, I see I am likely to have to do with several to-night, whom old time has powdered over pretty well. How do you get on?”

Member.—“Not so well as I could wish.”

Leader.—“Why, what’s the matter?”

Member.—“O why, I’m so tempted, I hardly know what I am, or where I am.

“ ‘Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love my God, or no?
Am I His, or am I not?’”

Leader.—“Do you allow yourself to be deceived by language such as that you have just recited? Just look at the weakness and folly those lines contain? Do you ever ask whether you love yourself or no? whether you love your son or no? your wife or no? You see what paltry and idle stuff it is. Hours and hours pass away in which you scarcely think of your children! Have you, therefore, lost your love for them? Only let some incident occur to warn you that they are in danger, and you are instantly apprised of the fact that your love of them is deeply inwrought in your nature. So it is with the love of God in the hearts of true believers. The ecstacies which we are occasionally the subjects of, are no stronger proofs that we are lovers of God, than that confident reliance on God’s faithfulness which urges the Christian to say, ‘I will go with thee to prison and to death.’ We may glorify God as well in the valley of humiliation, as on the mount of transfiguration. Be not as anxious for spiritual enjoyments as for holiness of heart and life. God will give you as many of the former as will serve

you best. Well, friend, if the Lord has done much for thee every way, what is now the state of thy experience?"

Member.—"Bless the Lord, I feel happy and comfortable. I have much to be thankful for."

Leader.—"Indeed you have; I have frequently heard you remark that God was so abundant in His kindness to you, that He giveth you not only a full cup, but also maketh it run over. Great reason, indeed, have you to rejoice and be thankful. But, my brother, let us remember, 'Where much is given much will be required.' Let us see to it, then, that the overflowings of our cup be not appropriated to our own use, but be given to him whose cup is scarcely ever half-filled. O, that's brother S—I see; I hope it is well with thee."

Member.—"Well, I've been looking at my late experience, and don't find it satisfactory—rather below the mark of my purpose—but I am resolved to make better out, and that every succeeding week shall surpass its predecessor. I mean to be holier and more self-devoted every day."

Leader.—"Well, if you succeed in carrying out your purpose, you will become a fine specimen of a Christian some time. I must say, friend, what you have advanced does not come approvingly to my ear. It sounds too much like the brag of the old man whom Paul commands us to crucify. Before honour is humility. 'He that humbleth himself shall be exalted.' 'Tis well to form good purposes and good resolutions, but we must despair to carry them out in our own strength. The Apostle says, 'When I am weak then am I strong; when I trust in the strong for strength, then I find I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' So Jesus has all the honour and all the praise of our doings. Well, Mary, do you still hold faith and a good conscience?"

Member.—"Indeed, sir, I can hardly say I do; this awful temper of mine, I fear, will be my *ruin*, as it does now frequently destroy my peace. I am so troubled about it, and feel so discouraged. I am ashamed to kneel down to pray."

Leader.—"I see how it is; you would fain make your mind as beautiful and smooth as that of an angel, and then you could come before the Lord in all the self-confidence of your own moral beauty, thinking, no doubt, the Lord would be delighted to see what trouble you had been at to render yourself fit to receive

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His mercy. Now, Mary, you cannot get rid of your bad temper, but by bringing it straight to Himself; tell Him all about it, humble thyself before Him on account of it, and He will give thee strength to subdue it, for His Son's sake, who has 'shed His blood for thee, and ever liveth to make intercession for thee.' He will show thee 'the blood that purgeth every stain.' Now, Susan, I am glad to see you here to-night. It looks well of your master and mistress to allow you a little leisure to attend to the concerns of your soul, and to the duties of religion."

Member.—"They are very kind, I am glad to say; there is a pleasure in serving them."

Leader.—"You please me much to hear you talk so. Serve them as though you were serving the Lord Himself, and 'your peace will flow as a river.' We cannot well serve another for Christ's sake without serving ourselves. Come, sister P—, tell us how you are getting on."

Member.—"O, I am so happy; God's love to me is so wonderful! I feel I can't praise Him enough. I would not change my condition for that of the Queen!"

Leader.—"Why, what abundance has fallen to you? But I have seen you happy with a crust and a little tea. Thank God,

'His presence makes my Paradise,
And where He is, is Heaven.'

Thou hast not found the Gospel a cunningly-devised fable. Another step or two, Mary, and then the fulness of joy for ever!"



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